

After Kamesit



By

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After Kamesit

A CHRONICAL OF A LOCAL HABITATION
AND SOME NAMES

With notes, maps and photographs

By

CARROLL F. DALEY

*For the helpful amendments
Carroll F. Daley*

Pilgrim Publishers
Kingston, Massachusetts
1974

To my mother,
Alice Winifred Ford Daley, 1868-1949,
Who passed on to me her love
Of beauty in nature
And in the lives of others.

AFTER KAMESIT

	Page
After Kamesit	2
I The Face of the Land and Growing Things	3
II The Indians	9
III Land Grants	17
IV The Churchills	25
V Cotton Family Land	27
VI Henry Richmond and His Son, Eliab	31
VII Nathaniel Clark Ownership	35
VIII Samuel Wright and the Wright Family	37
IX The First Burgesses	41
X John Burgess	45
XI The Community, Nearby, and Beyond	53
XII Phineas Burgess	69
Memories of Boot Pond Place, by Susan Burgess	85
XIII Peleg Burgess	121
XIV Lord's Point	127
XV The Dwelling House	131
XVI To the Present	143
APPENDIX—List of Sources Consulted	147
Chapter Notes	149

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Woodcut of Homestead, by Susan Burgess	Cover
Area Map	xi
Alonzo Warren Painting, 1884, photo by Chip Vincent, 1972	7
Great Lots Map, 1712-1713, Copied 1882 by C. H. Holmes .	15
Churchill-Richmond Deed, 1768	23
Wright-Burgess Deed, 1801	51
Phineas and Charlotte Burgess—Their Children	67
Rear View of House, Ice House on Pond, c.1880	72
View of House by Barnes, c.1880—Hitching Posts	79
Memories of the Boot Pond Place, Watercolors by Susan Burgess	85-119
Peleg Burgess at Side Door, Road up from the Pond	123
View from the Pond—Susan and Annie Burgess in Barn Art Class	125
The House, photo by Chip Vincent, 1972	133
Lawn and Field, photo by Chip Vincent, 1972	135
The Barn, photo by Chip Vincent, 1972	139
Milkweed—Woodcut by Nicole	Inside Back Cover

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Also to Miss Mary Burgess, Miss Rose Briggs, John Lord, Ellis Brewster, and Ruth Gardner Steinway for their readings and helpful comments.

Miss Minnie Burgess has been most helpful and I am indebted to Frances Burgess O'Keeffe for calling my attention and allowing me to examine the book *Memories of the Boot Pond Place* by her aunt, Susan H. Burgess.

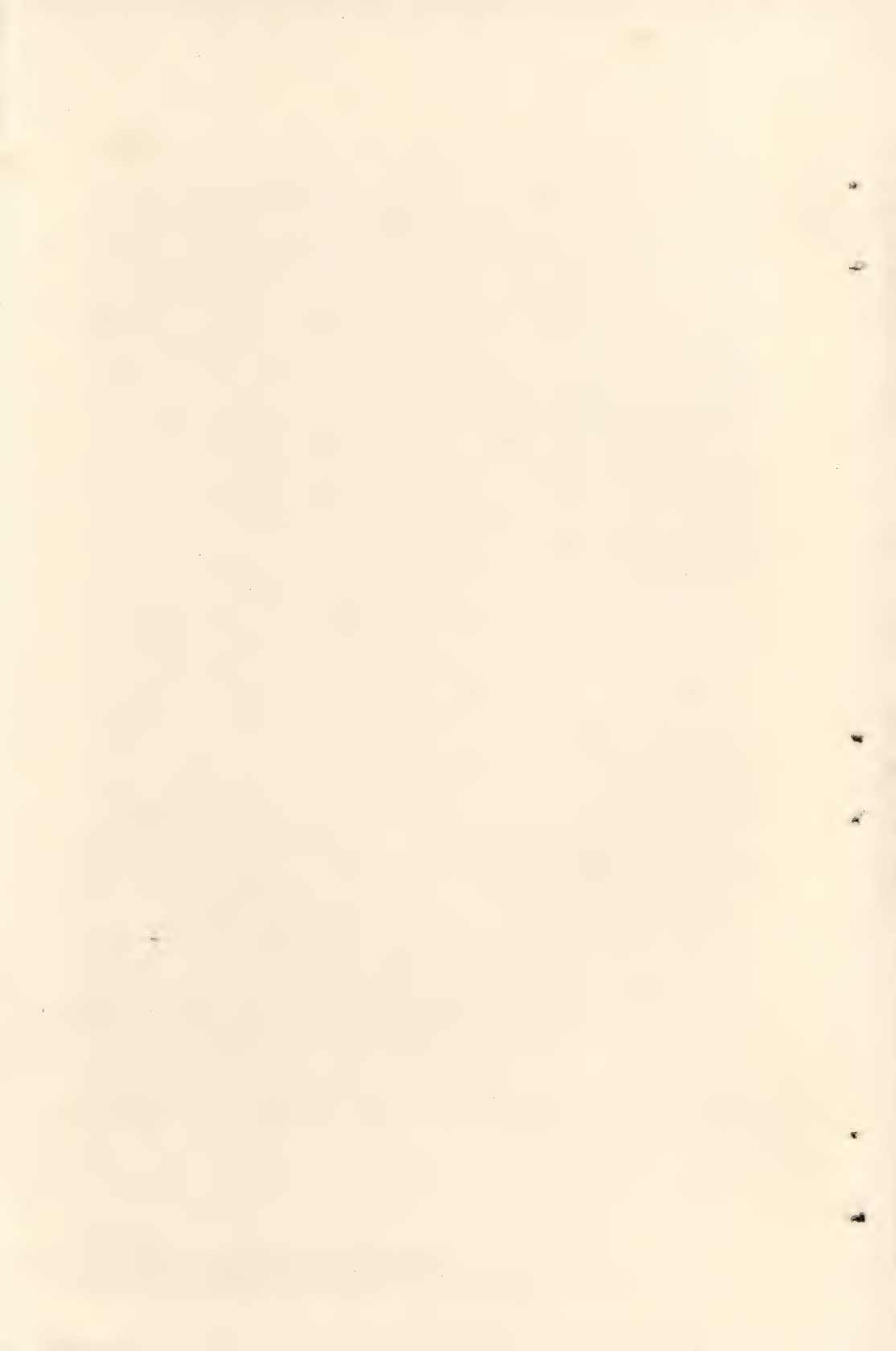
My thanks to Pamela Brougham for her assistance with old photographs, and especially to my friend, Chip Vincent for his recent photographs here. Also to Robert Crowley for his photographic work.

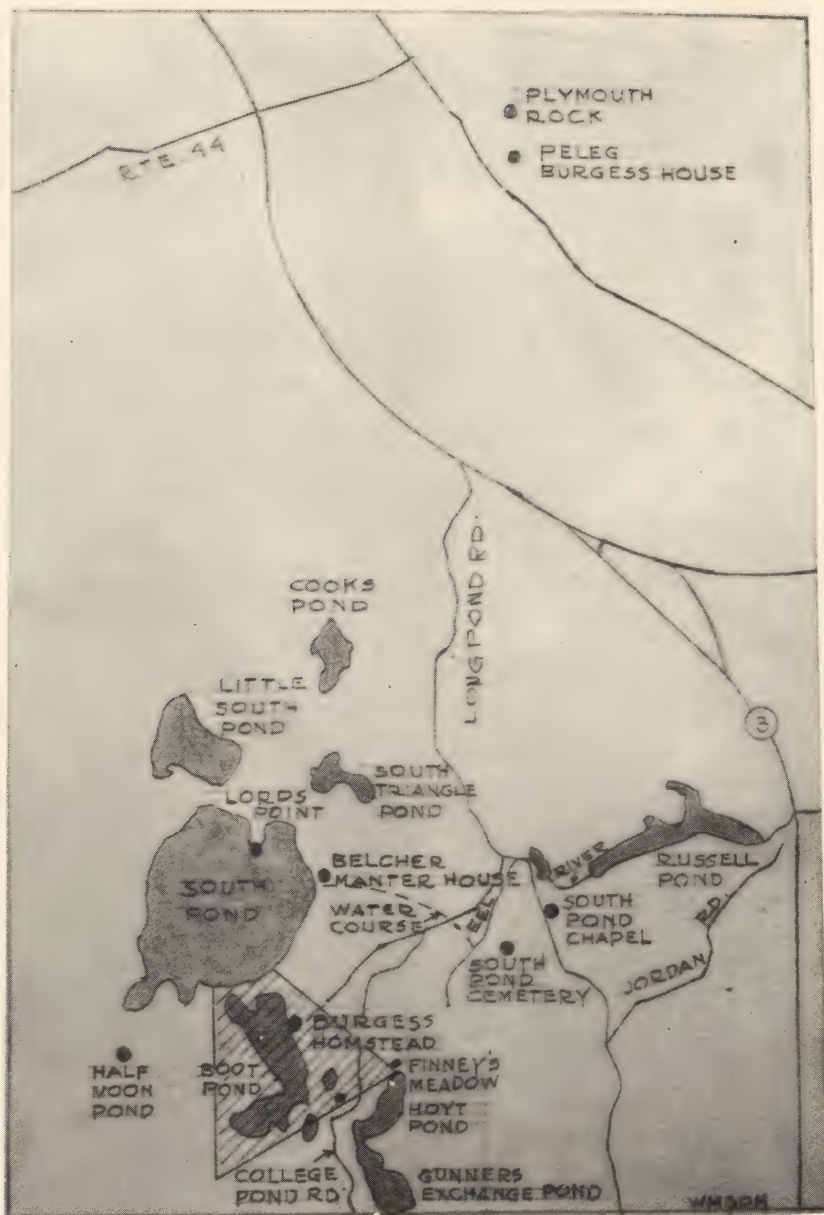
I appreciate the help given me by many kind persons.

Carroll F. Daley
Boot Pond
Plymouth, Massachusetts
1974

Dogen-zenji said, "Time goes from present to past." This is absurd, but in our practice sometimes it is true. Instead of time progressing from past to present, it goes backwards from present to past. Yoshitsune was a famous warrior who lived in medieval Japan. Because of the situation of the country at that time, he was sent to the northern provinces, where he was killed. Before he left he had farewell to his wife, and soon after she wrote in poem, "Just as you unreel the thread from a spool, I want the past to become the present." When she said this, actually she made past time present. In her mind the past became alive and *was* the present. So as Dogen said, "Time goes from present to past." This is not true in our logical mind, but it is in the actual experience of making past time present. There we have poetry, and there we have human life.

Shunryu Suzuki





A NOTE ON THE TYPE

This book was typeset in 12 Point Aldine Roman and printed on 70# laid ivory text. The type is designed after that of the Italian printer, Aldus Manutius, a classical scholar and friend of Erasmus. Aldus founded the Aldine Press in 1494 in Venice. He employed Francesco Griffo of Bologna, an independent punch cutter to produce the Roman font that bears his name. Italics were first designed by the Aldine Press in the year 1501. The book was designed and produced by the Pilgrim Publishers of Kingston, Massachusetts.

AFTER KAMESIT

The country about South Pond and the neighboring ponds in Plymouth, Massachusetts was called by the Wampanoag Indians "Kamesit." Although the region began to be inhabited almost three hundred years ago, its natural beauty abides and abounds. The many clear, bright, white sandy ponds are clean and sparkling. The great white pine woods, the low rolling hills, the bogs and old kettle holes maintain their charm. A vast abundance of wild shrubs and native wild flowers such as trailing arbutus (mayflower), sabbatias (marsh pinks), are about in many places.¹

What were once old logging roads can be walked for hours. In good weather clear skies of clean air make the stars and planets appear very close. I do not know the broad connotation of the word "Kamesit" in the Indian language of the time and place. It does suggest great fish and pine places and has a nice, pleasant sound.² For one who lives here now, a countryman of sorts and is surrounded by Kamesit, the word adds to a happy fate, my kismet.

I use the term "after Kamesit" because time has moved on and I would like to give an account of some of the happenings here since those Indian days; to tell about some of the people who have lived here and what their activities were, and about the very old house I live in now. It is an attempt to look at a segment of time, fleeting time, to penetrate a few unknowns, to explore what has been passing. We seek motivations and relationships in watching the continuum and haply some pleasures will arise.

There are those who believe that there is a spirit of place which provides a transcendence beyond the immediate reality around us. This spirit enters our own inner selves and transports us so that we can go beyond. Our transcendence is possible because the nature and special power of that particular place gives off a unique illumination.

It has been my good fortune to live for fifteen years in a homestead built by an early settler in this region, a house and site

still not readily changed from its beginning in 1769. It is five miles south from the center of Plymouth on the eastern shore of Boot Pond. For about a hundred years, 1770-1870, it was a working and providing farm, originally ninety acres. Such activity used to be called husbandry. In the early 1800's acreage was added to a peak of 200 acres. Some acres were cleared for dwelling, barn, animals and crops on the shores of two beautiful ponds, one called Great South, the other the Southerly Arm of Great South Pond, the latter eventually to be called Boot Pond because of its true boot contour. A strip of meadow beside the pond is mentioned in the first deed of sale. A meadow was always a thing of value because it meant open, flat, grassy, rich soil, usually moist, in contrast to the all pervasive woods. Now, for the last hundred years with the ceasing of husbandry, the forest has reclaimed much of what it once had before the fields were cleared.

The place where I live has been called the Burgess Place. This family had lived in the house from 1801 to 1959, beginning 32 years after it was built. This span amounts to more than a century and a half. The first two Burgess generations here, headed by John, born 1765 and Phineas, born 1807, earned their sustenance from this soil. Peleg, born 1840, lived here and later in Plymouth center. He bought the place from his father and his children in turn bought it from him in 1918 and spent their summers here until 1959.

As a sub-title to my account I have used the phrase "an account of a local habitation and some names."

You Shakespereans will recognize a borrowing from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, V. 1, in which the poet explains how it is possible for the imagination to give body to forms of things, turn them into shapes and "give to airy nothing a local habitation and a name." Perhaps a modern concept would be to say a place and an identity. In a sense we do have records, annals, traditions to guide us that are more than airy nothings, but hopefully, imagination may help produce a broader understanding of the experience we see before us with the aid of the mind's eye.

CHAPTER I

THE FACE OF THE LAND AND GROWING THINGS

I would like to go back with you farther, to fifteen or twenty thousand years ago. At that time the finale of the ice sheets was at hand. The ice sheets, hundreds of feet thick, started as glaciers in Canada perhaps a million years ago and worked southward two thousand miles and came to a melting end and their progress stopped in the Cape Cod and Nantucket area. They scraped bedrock to leave white sands, dumping earth debris to form moraines and drumlins. They left deep kettle holes of solid ice, which melted and formed what are now the many ponds of the area. The whole Plymouth region is dotted by many such ponds of various sizes.

It seems that nature wants to cover over water areas, so eventually some of these low depressions became swamps, bogs and low woodlands. Swamp shrubs such as alder, sweet pepperbush, sheep laurel, blueberries, acid loving plants, are everywhere, as are sedge, sphagnum moss, aquatic plants. Pitcher plants in low areas trap insects, as do sundews, as a source of some protein. Pink sabbatia grows abundantly on the shores of South and Boot Ponds, a jewel among wild flowers. It has been called the Rose of Plymouth. Its botanical name is *sabatia angularis*, and its stem gives the illusion of having four sides.

The poor quality soil left by the ice sheets in many places can by no means be rich for farming and crops. Sand is not far beneath the top soil except in a few meadow areas which the early settlers sought for their plantings. One example of a rich soil area is in the "mile and a half strip" in the region of Plymouth Rock which the Indians used for their plantings almost up to the time the *Mayflower* arrived. This strip of rich soil was good fortune for the Pilgrims, a decisive factor making it possible for the newcomers to grow corn and other crops and survive the first years.

The prevailing soil was hospitable for white pines and pitch pines, now growing everywhere, as well as for cedars which have a

liking for swamps. There are small patches of almost untouched original forest still found on the original Burgess homestead tract. There are a few isolated giant white pines up to 140 feet in height and trunks over three feet in diameter. I have found one white pine, straight and of enormous height, with a trunk measuring 84" around at the base, a diameter of 27" or so.

Pines are a sun loving tree and in these undisturbed wooded areas one can observe how they gradually overcame the oaks and other hardwoods by reaching higher for the sun. From 1688 the king's decree reserving all white pine of trunk diameter of 24" or more for the royal navy masts was enforced. Such trees were marked with an arrow to identify them as crown property.

The acid soil found in the area is a factor in the type of growth for shrubs and wildflowers found here. High bush and low bush blueberries, as well as huckleberries grow in abundance. Shadbushes, also juneberries, usually the first shrub to blossom in the spring, supposedly when shad or alewives move up from salt water into the freshwater streams for spawning, are seen around the property. There are three of considerable age near the house. Other members of the heath family thrive. Wild white azaleas grow in the shady areas near the ponds. Sheep laurel grows in many places. Wintergreen or checkerberry is common in the woods, their red berries a delight to the taste in the autumn. Trailing arbutus, called mayflower by the new arrivals, is thought to be the first bloom of spring they saw. It is found along banks in shady old wood roads in the early part of April after the snows have gone. This is also the state flower of Massachusetts. In June elderberry and arrowroot shrubs flower with white blossoms in many places. Steeple bush and sweet pepper bush give off their fragrance later on in the summer. Bayberry grows most everywhere and in the fall their silver berries are ready for those who would make candles from their wax.

The woods contain many sassafras trees, some of large size. Sassafras roots were one of the first important exports back to England for the Pilgrims. The roots make good tasting tea. The

trees have fall foliage of bright colors. In Colonial days, bedsteads were made of sassafras wood, believed to protect against vermin. Champlain carried back sassafras to France as a cure for venereal diseases.¹ Hornbeams, related to the ironwood family, have a structural form suggesting that of some Japanese trees. Their red, brown and yellow foliage in early fall long before frost is a pleasant sight. The settlers considered them good for fence post material. Related European trees were used for yoking oxen and possibly the word beam and horn are concerned with oxen.²

On the floor of the woods made soft by deep layers of pine needles moccasin flowers, called pink lady slippers, of the orchid family are found frequently. One past spring I found a cluster of perhaps fifty pink lady slippers in bloom in one small area and had a pleasure that reminded me of Wordsworth and his host of daffodils. Starflowers, of the primrose family and wild lily of the valley fill the deep pine grove near the house in May. In late August the woods are full of ivory Indian pipes. They burst up through the pine needle floor like a mushroom. This plant is without green and has a wax-like appearance and yellow flowers inside the pipe. It has mutual parasites in its structure and gets nourishment from decaying organic matter in the shade. With abundant moisture they greatly increase in number. The Indians sometimes used them for eye lotion.

In season, other wildflowers around here are campion, cinquefoil, devil's paint brush, blue-eyed grass, purple asters, goldenrod, milkweed, wild lettuce and asparagus, pink mullein, and lion's foot. There is a large clump of wild roses. There are yarrow, indigo, and yellow dog tooth and white and blue violets and in September the purple gerardia, a member of the snapdragon family. On the pond shores grow species of orchis, hyssop, lobelias, and the seven angled pipewort and sundews. Many wildflowers grow here that I have not mentioned, but you can see that there is a moveable feast of flowers.







CHAPTER II. THE INDIANS

Reference has been made to Indians in the South Pond area and the name "Kamesit" which they are said to have given the region.

Miss Catherine Marten of Plimoth Plantation has written a scholarly monograph called *The Wampanoags in the Seventeenth Century*, dated December, 1970, an extensive ethnography of these Indian people of the coastal area of Southern New England at the time of Massasoit.

By the time settlers came to the South Pond area almost 150 years had passed since the arrivals of 1620 and it would seem that few Indians were in the general area by 1770. Those who were had by necessity been strongly oriented to the white culture. Their habitations near the woods enabled them to be near lands for hunting and the growing of corn, squash and other crops. Fish and shell fish along the coast were a traditionally substantial part of their diet and probably could be obtained without great harassment well into the eighteenth century. In the early 1600's it was customary for the Indians to spend the winters in communal long houses back away from the coast for better protection from the weather. Spring, summer and fall were spent near the ocean for the gathering of fish and shellfish and the planting of crops. Meat and fish were preserved by smoking and drying. Corn, groundnuts, acorns and nuts could be preserved and cooked and provide starch and protein for their diet. They had no animals domesticated except dogs. The men did the hunting and the women tended the crops. One of the big chores was to scare away the birds until the seedlings were self-sustaining, requiring a constant all-day vigil in which the children helped.

Plymouth had been occupied by the Patuxet, or more accurately, the Wampanoags, one of the tribes designated as Algonquins, according to Squanto the only native to survive. He had been brought to England in 1619 by a coastal vessel, and had come back with a knowledge of English and was a faithful and helpful friend to the settlers in their relations with the Indians.

The proprietors, whose function we see in connection with the division of the ten great lots, had jurisdiction over the deeds of land bought from Indians. In 1643 the General Court required that all purchases of Indian lands have its approval. In 1660 it further required that it was prohibited to receive any lands under the pretence of a gift from the Indians without the approval of the Court. Until by conquest in King Philips War in the 1670's, all Indian lands were secured to them by purchase or treaty. Major conflicts until then were avoided in comparison with other New England settlements.

The Indian population in Southern New England before 1620 has been estimated at 20,000, and the Indian population was .22 Indians per square mile.

The Indians had a valuable cultural trait in that they emphasized hospitality and considered giving to be as important as receiving, if not more so.

By 1800 the town voted that the sale of Indian lands that were held by the town should have the proceeds of their sale applied to the support of the schools, but the records are silent concerning the amount realized from the sales, according to Wm. T. Davis.

Arrowheads have been found in some quantity over the years in this vicinity. They are often found on the shores of the ponds,

particularly in the early spring when ice scours the sand. It has never been my good fortune to find one.

When there were Indians or a few surviving Indians in the region there have been marriages between them and whites. There are people in Plymouth today who have Indian blood in their veins, and who although quiet about it, do seem to have a happy pride in the fact.

The first European to visit and observe and also to write an account of his experiences with the Indians of this region, the Wampanoags in particular, is Giovanni Verrazzano, a Florentine and a resident of Rouen, sailing under French auspices in the ship *Dauphine* in 1524. They began near the Azores and sighted land at New Jersey. He and his party voyaged north for eleven weeks up to the coast of Maine. He gives us the first description of Rhode Island and Narragansett Bay, about forty miles from Plymouth. He spent fifteen days there from late April into May, the planting season for the Indians. They were in a fertile part of New England and he was impressed by the open prairies, well peopled by sedentary Indians, the vegetation largely patterned by man.

These quotations from Verrazzano accounts are taken from *Sixteenth Century North America*, by Carl O. Sauer, University of California Press, 1971.

Professor Sauer tells about a score of boats coming out to greet the *Dauphine*. The natives clambered aboard, among them two "kings" of fine stature and carriage. He then quotes Verrazzano:

"The elder had about his naked body a buckskin, worked with damask and with various adornments; the head was bare and hair coiled at the back with various bindings; about them a large chain with

stones of diverse colors these are the most handsome people and gentle in their manners of any we have met on this navigation. They exceed ourselves in size; color; the profile sharp, the hair long and black and they give great attention to its care; the eyes are black and alert, and their bearing is sweet and gentle, much in the manner of olden days.

" . . . They are very generous and give anything they have. We formed great friendship with them. One day when we were trying to come into port with the ship from a league at sea, the weather being contrary, they came to the ship with a great number of their boats, their faces painted and made up in different colors in token of friendliness, and bringing us of their food. They showed us where we should make port to save the ship and accompanied us to the place where we dropped anchor."

Sauer goes on to say:

"The observations were made of the Narragansett nation living on the western side of the bay and the Wampanoag of the east side. Both nations were numerous and well practiced in agriculture, fishing and hunting. The houses were the Algonquian wigwams in the form of a bell-shaped beehive, the frame of saplings set in the ground, bent together and lashed at the top, covered with mats or bark. The idyll of Narragansett Bay called to mind the virtuous life of olden times that men of the Renaissance learned from classical writings."

The lands of the Wamponoags, that virtuous group of people, extended to the area of Plymouth Rock. We shall see how the new arrivals and their descendants set about to distribute these lands for the good of all the inhabitants by means of land grants.







CHAPTER III. LAND GRANTS

At this point perhaps you would be interested in how some families came into possession of additional lands and homesites beyond the central village such as the South Pond area. The thousands of acres of land surrounding the site of the original settlement were held in common by all of the inhabitants, or more accurately the free holders or proprietors. These lands were thus available for distribution and use, so that the colony could grow and support more settlers.

The General Court, the ruling body, was made up of the whole body of freemen. At first the freemen were signers of the Mayflower Compact and later such persons as new settlers or inhabitants from other towns moving permanently to Plymouth might be added by majority vote. In a sense the people of Plymouth were a legislative body in themselves.

The Court had power to elect officers, make laws, and after paying off the indebtedness owed the English stock company, Plymouth was recognized as a town in 1633. In the beginning land within Plymouth was considered as held in common until legally granted away to specific persons or users. The land in the center, commonly known as the mile and a half strip, was the first apportioned. Land grants were made at various times by the General Court. In 1702 it was voted that a thirty acre lot should be given to each proprietor and ungranted land in the mile and a half square tract should be held for the town and sold from time to time for its benefit.

As explained by Wm. T. Davis, all common lands beyond the central district were granted to the freemen of the town, two

hundred one in number, who were called, after the town of Plympton was set off and incorporated, *Plymouth and Plympton Proprietors*. These proprietors organized with records and a clerk and recorded their grants and sales. "In 1705 they voted to grant each of their number a twenty acre lot and shortly after a sixty acre lot. In addition in the same year all the cedar swamps within the town were divided into thirty nine great lots which were subdivided into shares and distributed by lot." These transactions can be examined today in the town records.

In 1710 it was voted to lay out the remainder of their lands, thirty thousand acres, into ten great lots, southwest and south of the central area. These boundaries are found in the records. There is a survey and map compiled in January, 1882 by C. H. Holmes, surveyor, on file in the Registry of Deeds concerning the shares in the eight great lots laid out beginning in 1712. These lots run north and south. On the west the first extends from West Pond south to the Wareham line. Proceeding eastwardly, the next seven lie southward to the Half Way Pond River, the beginning part of Agawam River, area. The ninth is in the area of Mast Road, Halfway Pond, Long Pond, and the Herring Path. The tenth lies east and west of the Sandwich Road.

The size of the shares in the lots varied widely in acreage, being influenced by such factors as uplands, swamps, meadows, wood lots, accessibility and desirability in general. Desirable shares may be of thirty acres. Less desirable or remotely accessible shares might have a hundred acres or more.

Great South Pond was mostly in the fifth great lot. On the north, the first share was on its western shore. The second share is directly south of the first and includes land on the west and east shores of the present Boot Pond, extended south to approximately half of the Pond. The Burgess homestead is in this second share.

Other Burgess lands were in the third and fourth shares of the fifth great lot and also in the sixth great lot to the east.

The thirty thousand acres involved in the distribution south to the approximate present southern boundaries of the town of Plymouth contain many large and lovely ponds, some of which were once collectively called the South Ponds. They are spring fed, with white sandy shores with a slight change in depth as the water table fluctuates. In the area are many streams and the Agawam River. Probably a large portion of the original distribution is now in the Myles Standish State Forest which goes to the Wareham line, with the waters of Buzzards Bay not far beyond.

It is pleasant to recall that Plymouth was once pristine and unsettled for the most part. In the natural state the early settlers could partake of such beauty, a compensation in part for the toil and effort and hardship put forth by them to provide a livelihood and increase what they called "improved" land.

It can be said that those who came to the outlying woodlands of the area to clear it, make homesteads for themselves and live lives as husbandmen and yeomen were not affluent central village inhabitants. They were young, able-bodied types who had a future vision of ultimate security and land owning from the result of their own laborious efforts. Owning land was the prime motive for security from the early beginnings. It is well to remember that these people were only a few generations from the poorer English classes and culture as were most people in the Plymouth settlement. A livelihood from the land by one's own toil was the principal one open to them.

Access to the first homesteads in the South Ponds region from Plymouth was south by the South Pond Road, now called Long Pond Road. Leaving the road at a point where the watercourse crossed the road a further woods road slightly

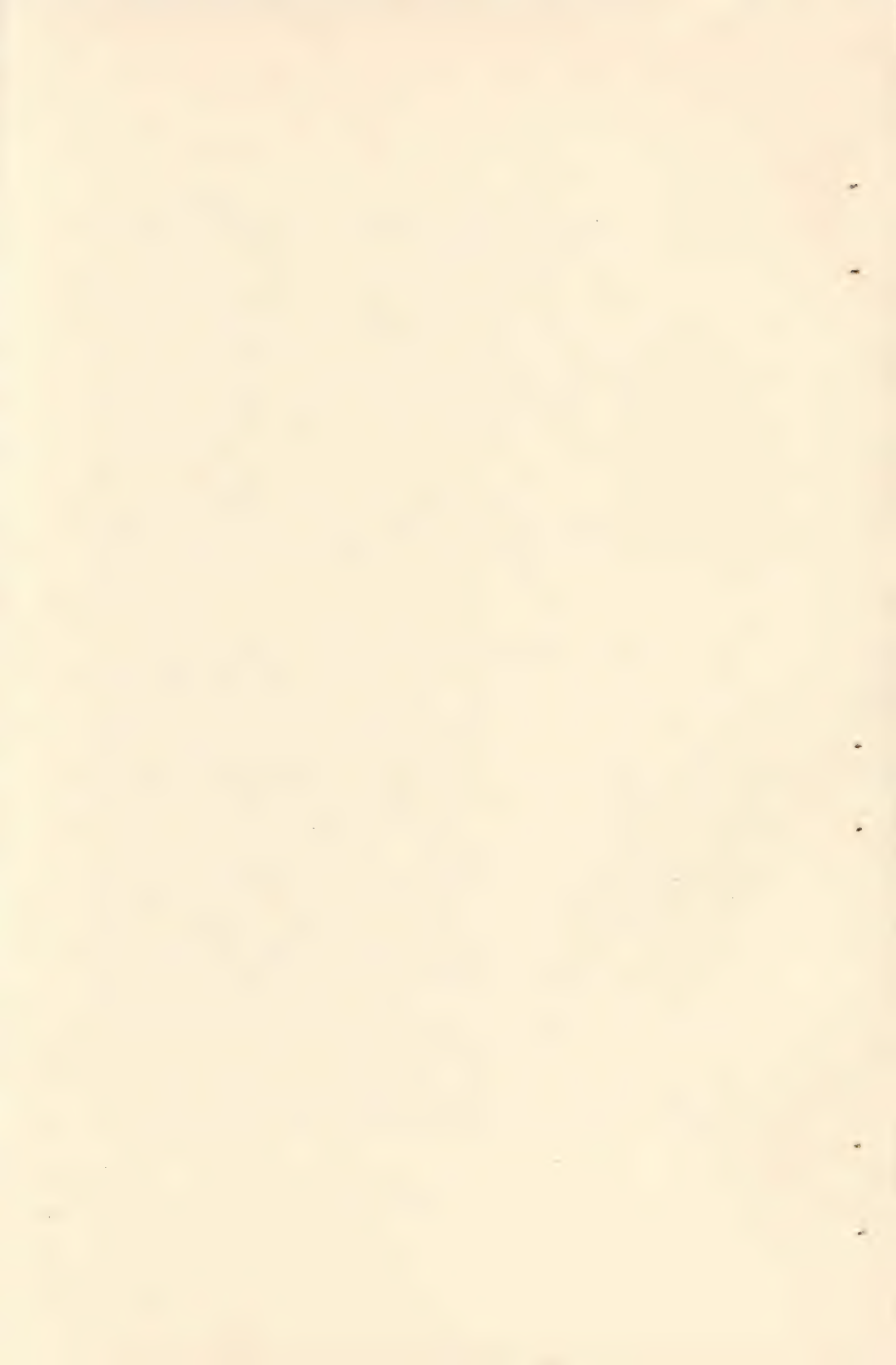
southwest, avoiding inclines for the horses where possible, lead past the Belcher Manter property and on to the Burgess homestead. For a long time it was called the Burgess Road and as it continued southward it was called Baptist Road. It continued on eventually to the Wareham and Rochester area. The Burgess and Baptist Roads are still basically woods roads and are most pleasant for walking.

It had been a custom one hundred years ago or more to refer to the region as that of the South Ponds. Beginning on the north the ponds would be Cook's, Triangle, Little South, Great South, Negro, Hallfield, Hoyt's, and Gunners Exchange. The original references to Great South Pond include its lower pond as "the southerly arm of Great South Pond," as one reads the deeds of the time. There was a small stream connecting the two bodies of water when the water level was high enough. The variation can average about eight feet and seems to go in cycles of about twelve years. South Pond is about one hundred feet above sea level.

As far as I have been able to determine, the term "Boot Pond" for this southerly arm seems to have been originated later on, perhaps after the 1850's. The map of Plymouth in 1830 drawn by the surveyor S. Bourne calls the lower arm "South Pond" as well. The use of the word "Boot" is realistic, for when accurately mapped the shape is like a high boot from a side view. Boot Pond is about 2500 feet in length and averaging 1200 feet in width, with the toe to the west in proportion. There is a high pine wooded ridge along the western shore. There is a small higher ground peninsula from the top of the pond on which the Douglas house was built in the 1870's.

We now come to the first owners of the lands near South Pond, members of the Churchill family, who first obtained a grant from the town of Plymouth in 1670. The Churchill lands were

held for 100 years and then bought by Henry Richmond, and to the south by Jonathan Holmes.



That Charles when this Indenture came to the said Court
 for the Church of Plymouth in the County of Plymouth a free & lawful
 in Confirmation of the sum of twenty pounds lawful money was paid and
 by Henry Siskinck of said Plymouth Burghess the said Church his heirs
 and assigns do by this Indenture grant sell & convey to the said Henry Siskinck
 his heirs & assigns forever All that by L. of West Land with a small piece of
 meadow lying on the Easterly side of South Field in said Plymouth which was
 assigned and let off to me in the direction of the Order of my deceased father
 the said Church did bequeath said Siskinck being deceased the 29. Brothers
 Charles of said date January 31. 1755. and recorded in the Records of said
 Church in the County of Plymouth Book 29 fol. 88 & 89. said Land containing above
 thirty Acres be the same now or then and was partly purchased by my said pa-
 ther the said Church by a Deed dated April 29 1735 and the

corded Book 30 folio 122. and partly bequeathed to him by his father
 his father the said Church and purchased from his Brother Charles. - The whole tract
 was originally granted by the Town of Plymouth to Joseph Churchill & Charles
 Churchill in the year 1670. and 1701. and recorded as appears by the Town Records
 Book 1. f. 65. & Book 2. f. 90. To have & to hold the same with all the
 Privileges and Appurtenances thereto relating to him the said Henry which he
 his heirs & assigns forever, To his & their only personal use & benefit. And the said
 Jonathan Churchill for by self my heirs Executors & Administrators do hereby
 Covenant with the said Henry Richard his heirs & assigns, that for the lawful
 use of the said Henry, that they are free of all incumbrances, And that said Henry
 his heirs & assigns shall confirm the same to him the said Henry and his
 heirs & assigns against the lawful claim & demand of all persons whatsoever
 & Corporation of which the said Jonathan Churchill do hereunto set my hand
 & Seal this 31st day of January Anno Domini one thousand seven hundred and
 sixty eight. - Attest my Wth Hannah gives up her right of Dower.
 Signed sealed & Delivered in the hands and purchased from his Brother Charles
 in presence of, and before signing. - Jonathan Churchill Seal
 John Cotton Hannah Churchill Seal
 Mary Cotton
 Plymouth 5th February 1768 The said Jonathan Churchill
 Jonathan Churchill just acknowledges this instrument to be his act & deed.
 Joseph Churchill Before John Cotton & others of said
 Received & Recorded February 5 1768 John Cotton



CHAPTER IV. THE CHURCHILLS

The first proprietors of the ninety acres "and small piece of meadow on the easterly side of South Pond" where my land is located, were members of the Churchill family. This land, later owned by the Burgess family, came to the Churchills by grants from the town of Plymouth, beginning in 1670 and 1702 from the common lands. The recipients were the brothers Joseph and Eleazer Churchill. The year 1670 would be 100 years before the property was sold outside the family, namely to Henry Richmond who made it into a homestead.

The Churchills were one of Plymouth's earliest, largest, and continuous families.¹ There is a Churchill house of the seventeenth century, one of three still standing now in Plymouth. In William Davis's Genealogical Register of Plymouth families up to 1883, they cover a span of 240 years and total some 250 lines and possibly 1,000 names. The progenitor was John Churchill who arrived in 1643 and married the next year. His extensive property ran on the east side of Sandwich Street in the Hobshole area to the bay shore. It extended from the brook at Nook Road south to the present Jabez Corner, named after Jabez Churchill, b.1756, the son of the second Elkanah, who had a shop at this corner. He had a son and a grandson named Jebez. Jabez' daughter, Mercy, the wife of William Sears, sold the south half of the house in 1872, after continuous ownership in the Churchill family of about 240 years. In 1973 the telephone directory lists six Churchills in the town of Plymouth.

The granted property begins on the easterly side of South Pond. From its northwest corner it runs easterly to Finney's Meadow which at present contains a large cranberry bog. It is

located north of Gunner's Exchange Pond, east of Snake Hill Road, and northwest of South Pond Cemetery. Josiah Finney was the first grantee of land by lot in the first decade of the eighteenth century. The southwest corner of the property begins at the Pond and runs easterly, bounded on the south by land then belonging to Jonathan Holmes, to Finney's Meadow on the east.

It is worth recalling that the owners of the land running along a boundary with the Churchills were a noted Plymouth family, the Cottons. They did not occupy it. Later buyers utilized it for homesteads. We now take a brief glimpse of the Cottons.

CHAPTER V. COTTON FAMILY LAND

The land adjoining the Churchill property toward the north at South Pond was owned by the famous Cotton family, by a grant from the town of Plymouth in 1713 to Josiah, born 1680 and Theophilus, born 1682. These brothers were granted the third share of the sixth great lot on the eastern shore of Great South Pond. What was called "laying out" meant that the land was allotted by the free holders of Plymouth for development and was carried out by a systematic procedure using the principle of chance or lot which was then recorded in formal records. This land was "in the range of John Churchill's land, bounded by his land until it comes to Finney's Meadow." It was also bounded on the west by South Pond and was later owned by Joseph Bartlett, Jr., and then by Belcher Manter.

In the beginning, John Cotton, born in Derby, England in 1585, came to Boston in 1633. He had a daughter, Mary, born 1642, who married the famous divine and one of the colony's first authors, Increase Mather. Their son was Cotton Mather, also famous as a writer and divine. His *Marginalia* is an important book of the time. Another of his writings called *An Horrid Snow* is an account of a massive New England blizzard in his time. He had a phrase for the forest and wilderness: "the Synagogue of Satan."

John Cotton had a son, also called John, born 1640. He was a graduate of Harvard College, class of 1657 at the age of 17. Living in Weathersfield, Conn., for a time, he came to Plymouth in 1667 and was settled as minister. During his ministry a church was built on the site of the present Unitarian Church. He continued until 1697 and died in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1699.

Col. Theophilus Cotton, 1716-1782, a son of Josiah Cotton, is remembered as a leader of a group of inhabitants who in 1774 with twenty yoke of oxen assembled to remove Plymouth Rock from the water's edge up to Town Square. In attempting to raise the rock it separated into two parts, one of which remained. In 1834 the portion at Town Square, weighing 6,997 pounds, was moved to the front yard at Pilgrim Hall. It remained there until 1880 when it was returned to its original location from which it was separated.²

This pastor Cotton had a son, John, and other children, among them, Josiah, born 1680, and Theophilus, born 1682. These brothers were granted the third share of the sixth great lot at South Pond.¹

In 1700, Josiah Cotton, after having graduated from Harvard College in 1698, was engaged to be the schoolmaster of the town for a term of seven years and during his administration the first school house was built. This was more than 80 years after the landing. Later, for many years he was Clerk of the Courts and Registrar of Deeds. For a time he preached to the Indians of Pembroke, Manomet and Herring Pond with a salary of twenty pounds "for propagating the gospel among the heathen." He perfected himself in the Indian language, wrote a grammar, and his sermons to the Indians were delivered in their own tongue. He died in 1756 at the age of 76. In 1700, after the death of the pastor, the parsonage was conveyed by his widow to her sons Josiah and Theophilus. The population of Plymouth in 1700 was approximately 600 people. This was nine years after the Plymouth Colony was consolidated into Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1691.

In the William T. Davis volume *Ancient Landmarks of Plymouth* there is a quotation from a poem of the seventeenth

century poet, Pomfret, called *Choice*. This reference to *Choice* was first made by Josiah Cotton in his diary, as Davis explains, to describe a house he bought in 1709 in the northern part of Plymouth near the seashore. The place was known as the Crow estate, from land sold by Francis Billington, of Billington Sea fame, in 1655 to William Crow. His widow, Hannah, later married John Sturdevant and had a daughter, Hannah, who married Josiah Cotton. It is to illustrate the ideal of a home:

“If heaven the grateful liberty would give,
That I might choose my method how to live,
Near some fair town I'd have a private seat,
Built uniform, not little nor too great;
Better if on a rising ground it stood,
Fields on this side, on that a neighboring wood.”

This ideal comes close to realization in the homestead dwelling built later on the shore of Great South Pond, a seat which has the characteristics asked for in Pomfret's lines.

The buyer of the land to the south of the Cottons, Henry Richmond, was the person who had the house built there, sixty years after Josiah Cotton used the Pomfret poem to describe his house in Plymouth. The two men could share a realization of the ideal site for a dwelling.



CHAPTER VI. HENRY RICHMOND AND HIS SON, ELIAB

Checking at the Registry of Deeds about Henry Richmond, the next owner after the Churchills, I found that he and his father had many real estate transactions in Middleboro, Massachusetts. His father, Henry, was a native of Cumberland, R. I., once a part of the Old Plymouth Colony. In 1747 he bought land in the "sixteen shilling purchase" area from his father, recorded in Book 39, Page 201. In 1754 Henry and Sarah Richmond sold land in Middleboro for 133 pounds, which land originally belonged to John Wright, Book 45, Page 21. There will be more on the Wrights later on. In 1759, Book 45, Page 17, he bought land from William Hooper, called "Titticut" land in Middleboro. His last transaction there was in 1761. Book 53, Page 43.

Then on Feb. 3, 1768, according to Book 54, Page 19, he bought 90 acres at South Pond from Jonathan and Hannah Churchill for twenty pounds. It was referred to as woodland. He shortly built buildings and made it into a homestead and farm, as the deed of sale of 30 acres of this land to his son, Eliab, five years later indicates. His son came to Plymouth about this time and married Hannah Holmes in 1773.

The sale to his son, as described in Book 57, Page 54, was in the amount of 13 pounds, six shillings for the thirty acres. This amount represents about sixty percent of the cost of all of the property Henry Richmond bought from the Churchills five years earlier.¹

In 1794 there is recorded a marriage between Henry Richmond, probably the son of the owner, and Submit Wetherell.

No doubt giving a daughter such a name at that time was fitting and proper, but hardly so today.

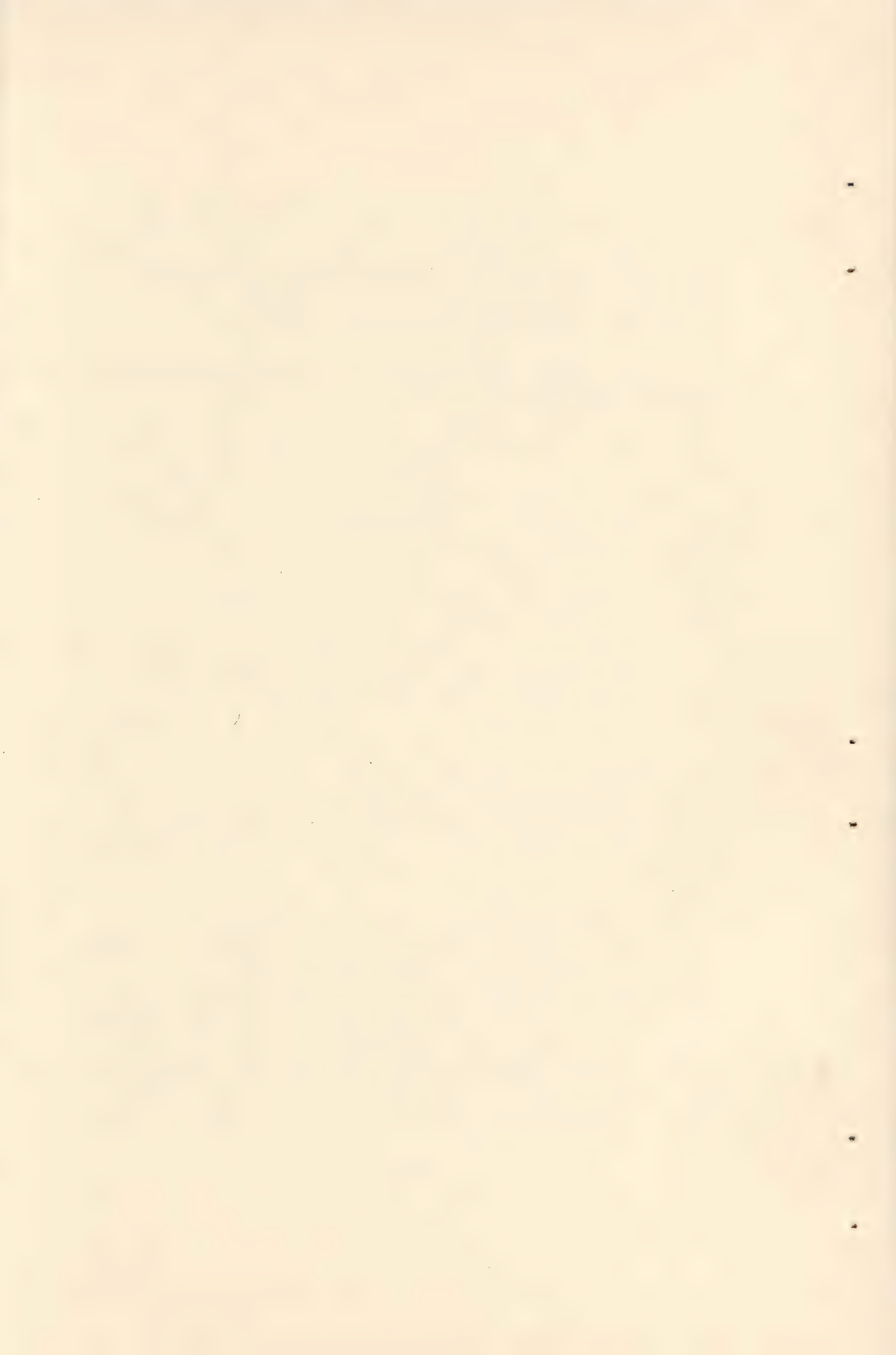
About 300 feet east of the Burgess house, near Baptist Road in the woods are large rectangular cut foundation stones and a small grassy area. I have speculated that a small adequate dwelling house or cottage typical of the time could have been located there, perhaps 18 x 20 feet with upper loft, which later could have been moved and attached to the north side of the main Richmond dwelling, or later after the Richmonds, and serve eventually as a kitchen. That such an attachment was made is evident and visible. Its age and construction and the type of lumber used is the same as that of the main house. This addition could supplant an original kitchen area in the southwest part of the house. This transference could have been carried out at the time of Eliab or later and not recorded in the Registry records. If there were a dwelling on Eliab's property in the year of the sale it is not mentioned in the deed of sale. Near the little house site are the remains of a dump of old glass bottles. The land is now owned by Dr. Milton Brougham.²

Sarah Richmond (Henry's daughter, I assume) married Samuel Wright in 1783. This Samuel Wright bought the Richmond homestead later on March 18, 1788, from the later owner Nathaniel Clark.³

There is an interesting transaction by Henry Richmond about a tight money problem for him as shown in Book 57, Page 75, on March 7, 1773, the year of several of his transactions. He gave a mortgage on his homestead for "12 pounds, 15 shillings lawful money to me in hand paid by Jesse Vaughan of Middleboro, husbandman." All ended well, as the mortgage was discharged and the property reconveyed, recorded January 6, 1777. The mortgage had been for one year. This period was considered to be a time of

great fluctuations in the value of money in the colonies, with the Revolutionary war continuing on, causing great depreciation. Jesse Vaughan was an active man, as ten property grants by him over several years are recorded in the Registry of Deeds.

We now come to the next owner of the homestead, apparently a bachelor.



CHAPTER VII. NATHANIEL CLARK OWNERSHIP

The next in the succession of owners was Nathaniel Clark. On April 3, 1783, Henry Richmond sold his homestead and lands to Clark, after ownership for fifteen years and the building of the house and buildings. The deed is recorded in Book 62, Page 24. The price paid was 60 pounds.

Paying 20 pounds originally and receiving 13 pounds from his son Eliab for 30 acres, he had a net gain of 53 pounds on his undertaking, assuming a constant value in the currency of the period, which is unlikely. About a year later, April 29, 1784, as found in Book 63, Page 69, Eliab and Hannah Richmond sold also to Nathaniel Clark their thirty acres, having been held for eleven years. The price was 11 pounds and 8 shillings, so he had a loss of a little more than a pound from what he had paid his father.

Records indicate there was a Nathaniel Clark, born 1747, the son of the fourth William Clark. In 1796 he married Lydia Sampson. There were Sampsons resident in the area. He would be a bachelor aged 37 when he bought the homestead, 1783-1784, and did not become married until eight years after he had sold the homestead in 1788.

On April 24, 1789, a Nathaniel Clark of Rochester, Mass., granted to Johnathan Bates and John Burgess of Rochester, probably the John Burgess later to buy the Pond homestead, a piece of land in Rochester, Book 69, Page 26. This was a year after Clark sold the homestead. He had held the property for five years at the Pond and the sale took place on March 18, 1788, and was bought by Samuel Wright, Book 94, Page 259.



CHAPTER VIII.

SAMUEL WRIGHT AND THE WRIGHT FAMILY

Samuel Wright, Jr., and his wife Sarah Richmond, whom he married five years previously, a daughter of a former owner, bought the ninety acres and homestead built by Henry Richmond. He paid Nathaniel Clark the sum of seventy pounds "lawful money in hand."

During the thirteen years Samuel Wright owned the property he made a living from farming and general husbandry.¹ A yeoman is one who worked his own ground for his income. In England these small landed proprietors have been considered fundamental people in performing services from the early days.

The Wright family is a prominent one in this area, almost from the beginning. In old English, a wright is a carpenter, usually in a combined word, such as shipwright. William Wright, born 1588 in Austerfield, England, near Scrooby Manor House, a center for the Separatists, came on the *Fortune* in 1621, the next ship after the *Mayflower*. His wife, Priscilla Carpenter, came with him, and some children. He had a son, Richard, who died in 1691, about 83 years of age.

William settled in what is now Plympton, Mass. His grandchildren were Adam, Esther, Mary, John and Isaac. Adam, 1645-1734, had two sons by Sarah Soule and eight more children by his second marriage to Mehitabel Barrows. One of these eight was the first Samuel, 1699-1773. See the notes for a copy of his will.²

His son, the second Samuel, 1728-1814, had nine children, one of whom was the third Samuel, born about 1760, married

Sarah Richmond in 1783. Wm. Davis lists 37 lines of names of Wrights in his Genealogical Register.

Through the courtesy of Mr. Eugene Wright, an octogenarian who lived in Plymouth and was a descendant of the Plymouth and Plympton Wrights, I was given genealogical information that the third Samuel eventually removed to Hebron, Maine, and is buried there. The exact date of his birth and death has not been available.

Many days and hours intermittently over three years I spent at the Plymouth Registry of Deeds pouring over microfilm slides of deeds in a viewer trying to decipher all sorts of bygone styles of handwriting in an endeavor to trace back the ownership of the Boot Pond homestead to its beginning. Since it didn't seem to be known, I had the urge to seek it out. I had seemed to have come to a dead end in my search, but decided one day to give the effort one last try. The index pointing toward the solution I was seeking was not quite complete, or else I had just missed it, somehow. During the last attempt, on the lighted screen of the viewer I came across the names of Nathaniel Clark and Samuel Wright and the whole thing began to come together. The continuity back to Johnathan Churchill and Henry Richmond was revealed in a short time. It was like Revelation for me.

Now to go back to the Wright family.

Joshua Wright had a homestead and farm on the present road into the South Pond Cemetery. Nothing remains of it now except a few foundation stones, pointed out to me by Mr. William Holmes, a life-long resident of the area whose people go back to the early beginnings. The Wright family gave part of their land for the location of the South Pond cemetery, according to Miss Minnie Burgess.

Joshua Wright, yeoman, according to 77-145, on Feb. 5, 1795, for 24 pounds sold John Burgess of Plymouth forty acres, his first purchase in Plymouth. The land was southward of Gunners Exchange Pond, originally laid out to John Foster, as in the First Book of records, p. 224. When John Burgess bought the homestead and land in 1801 from Samuel Wright he now adjoined the land he bought from Joshua Wright six years earlier.

There were neighborly ties between the families in the vicinity, romances and several marriages. John Burgess's son Nathan in 1813 married Susanna, the daughter of Joshua Wright.

The last transaction of the Wrights, Samuel and Sarah, was the sale of the homestead, 91-78, in 1801 to John Burgess for \$600.00. The original deed was given to me by the kindness of Miss Mary Burgess. It contained the same acreage that came from the Churchills originally.

It would have been exciting to find more evidence of the personal lives of these people we have been writing about. Such information would come from letters, diaries, written accounts by friends and contemporaries, descriptions by those who knew them and their activities at the time.

However, it seems evident that these people were absorbed in their daily activities for the most part. They did not have the leisure or affluence nor was it the custom of the times to keep records of personal feelings. Wills, land transactions, vital statistics, court proceedings were necessary and recorded and are useful as far as they go. We have to depend mostly on such sources and infer what we reasonably can and use imagination wisely.

It is not really a case of "the short and simple annals of the poor" for they did lead lives of significance, some dramatically so,

but their innermost lives are hidden from us in the shades of the past.

CHAPTER IX. THE FIRST BURGESSES

We now come to the Burgess family and its occupancy of the house from 1801 to 1959. This family has an extensive and well recorded genealogy and history and I would like to tell you about them and point out some interesting factors. In a sense, such a family mirrors in part the settlement and growth of this part of Massachusetts¹

The name Burgess is of ancient origin, signifying an inhabitant of a borough, a freeman, a citizen. It has been spelled Burge, Burges, in early Plymouth documents. The first was said to be Stephen de Burg who came to England with William the Conqueror in 1066.

Thomas Burgess, called Burge, came to these shores in 1630, supposedly to escape the Stuart persecution, to Salem, Mass. He resided in Lynn, Mass. briefly. In 1637 land was assigned him in Duxbury. The next year in 1638 he settled in Sandwich, Mass. at the beginning of Cape Cod. He became a large land owner and with advancing age was called Goodman Burgess, an archaic form of the word "mister." He held many town offices and was deputy to the General Court in Plymouth Colony for several years before it ceased in 1691 and became part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

He had more than six children. The property assigned to him in Sandwich remained in the family 220 years. The house which no longer exists bore the marks of a British cannon from the war of 1812.

The house in Sandwich, built in 1638, became known as the Thomas Tupper house. Jacob, a son of the first Thomas, in 1660 married Mary Nye, the granddaughter of Thomas Tupper. The Nye family descended from Lave Nye, a figure in the royal house of Sweden in the fourteenth century.

Their son, Ebenezer, b.1672, had a grandson, Seth, 1736-1795, who removed to Nova Scotia in 1760. He kept a farm and general store in Kingsport, near Canning. With him he brought his father Benjamin's account book, dated 1742, showing him to be a man of diligent habits. To Ebenezer has been attributed ancestry of Henry L. Dawes, vice president at the time of Calvin Coolidge. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was twice descended from the first Thomas Burgess through the marriage of Ebenezer Burgess to the great granddaughter of Richard Warren, a *Mayflower* passenger. A Patience Burgess married Malachi Delano. Thornton W. Burgess, a well known author of children's books was descended from the first Thomas Burgess of Sandwich.

The second Thomas Burgess, born about 1627 in England, came to the new world at the age of three with his father. In 1643, at 16 years of age, he was enrolled to bear arms. In 1661 he left Sandwich in the Plymouth Colony for New port, R. I. He was admitted as freeman in Rhode Island and Providence Plantations and served as a grand juror in 1667. In 1648 he married Elizabeth Bassett. After her death he married Lydia Gaunt. This union produced one child, the third Thomas, 1668-1743, born at Little Compton, Rhode Island.

The third Thomas has thirteen children by three wives. He married Esther in 1691, and had Edward, Deborah, Esther Lydia. In 1707 he married Martha Clossen and had Joseph, John (the first John), Mary, Thomas (the fourth Thomas), and Jacob. In 1721 he married Patience Doty and had Mercy, Rebecca, Martha and

Nathaniel. This last child was the father of John Burgess who became the owner of the Pond homestead.

Nathaniel, May 1729-January 1, 1793, was born at Little Compton, R. I. He removed to Plymouth and later to Saquish Neck in the outer harbor. In keeping with his prolific father, he had twelve children. He married Ruth Chandler of Plymouth. Their children were Jacob, Nathaniel, Patience, who married Malachi Delano, Thomas (the fifth Thomas), Lucy, William, John, Mercy, Nathan, Rebecca, Zerviah.²

Nathaniel's will, #3389, was probated in 1789 and administered by his son, Jacob. The inventory of his estate showed a value of \$1241.46, not inconsiderable at that time. He had lived and farmed on Saquish Neck on the Plymouth-Duxbury outer shore. Principal access to Plymouth would be by boat.



CHAPTER X. JOHN BURGESS

John Burgess, 1765-1850, is sometimes referred to as the second John. The first John was a half brother of his father, Nathaniel. Keeping in the stride of his father and grandfather, he had thirteen children. As a young man, after leaving his family farm on Saquish by the ocean, he lived for a time in Rochester, Mass., in that part now included in Wareham, Mass., near the Plymouth southern boundary.

John Burgess lived on the homestead from the purchase in 1801 until his death in 1850 at the age of 85. He prospered, added to his acreage, and was a land owner in Plymouth center.¹ The sustaining of a family of thirteen children and two parents for a period of fifty years from a small country farm is a significant accomplishment.

He married first Annie Tribble, 1765-1805. Their children were Chandler, Annie, Nathan, Lucy, Mary, Serviah, Hannah, Jabez, Sarah, Rebecca, and Nathaniel. Secondly, about age 41 he married Ruth Sprague, 1766-1846, of Duxbury. By her he had one child, Phineas Sprague Burgess, 1807-1890. As in the case of his father Nathaniel, who was the last son of the third Thomas, Phineas was the last child of his father, John. He became the next owner of his father's homestead.

Ruth Sprague was the twin sister of the Hon. Seth Sprague of Duxbury. He was a representative in the Massachusetts legislature. His son, Hon. Peleg Sprague, 1793-1886, was U. S. senator from Maine 1829-1835 and judge of the U. S. District Court in Boston, 1847-1865. Mary Burgess has said that the family tradition was

that she considered herself an old maid and might as well go to Plymouth, marry John, and help bring up his children.²

John Burgess's son, Phineas, cared for him in his last years, as can be seen from his will of 1850.

The action of deeding over to a son of the father's property during the father's or parents' lifetime with a provision for continuous use during their natural lives was a common custom from the early Plymouth Colony days. It is illustrated here between John and Phineas Burgess. Although the son chosen might be one of many sons, it was often the one who continued living in the homestead, farming the property, and providing care for the elders. John Burgess lived nineteen years after this arrangement to a long life of eighty-five years.

The advantages for such an agreement to a father as he ages is apparent. It provided security and some comfort against the time when these factors were most necessary. It might work to the economic advantage of the son as well. It was their solution to a problem that people living today have to solve by radically different methods, be they better or worse.

The same procedure was carried on from father Phineas to son Peleg and to a certain extent by Peleg in the arrangement with his children.

At the Plymouth Registry of Probate I have examined the will of John Burgess, #3370. It throws some light on parts of the life of that time. The administrator was his son, Phineas. He died in 1850 at the age of 85. Before the nineteenth century began he was already thirty-five years old. Those appointed by the Court to appraise the estate were George Manter, Truman Sampson, and Freeman Manter.

A synopsis of the estate is as follows:

One lot of woodland called watercourse lot containing about twenty-five acres at 12 doll per acre.	300.00
--	--------

One lot of woodland by the name of half moon pond, lot containing about 30 acres at 5 doll 40 cts. per acre	162.00
---	--------

(Other real estate and buildings had been previously sold to his son Phineas).

Personal Estate

Fifty-eight cords and four feet of wood	121.62
Farming tools	5.00
Boat boards	.50
Furniture	2.50
Wearing apparel	20.50
Bed and bedstead and gun	7.50

157.62

A cord of wood for fuel is a stack 4 x 4 x 8 feet or 128 cubic feet. A cord here is valued at about \$2.50 cut. This would include the worth of the standing timber and removal from the woods. By our standards the pay would be meagre. From the administrator's account it can be seen that the sawing labor is priced at about 95 cents per cord. The wood itself has a value of \$1.55 per cord. The house contained three or more wood-burning stoves, plus a fireplace and heating fuel was needed for five or six months per year.

Let us not be unaware of the great amount of manual labor, exerted by someone at least, for heat. It is in marked contrast with today's thermostatic systems.

The relatively large value assigned to wearing apparel is not uncommon, but it does point up to us the high value assigned to clothing in their society which had to include sheep raising and hand spinning of cloth before the days of mills. "Best clothes," such as wool suits were made to last for years. Black felt hats, often of beaver, one of which remains in the house in good condition, and black dress shoes were part of the apparel. In inventories, beds were singled out as items of value. The term "bedstead" is what we would call a bed. Remember Shakespeare directed in his will that his wife should receive his "second best bed."

Below I list the expenses of the administrator, Phineas Burgess:

Cutting 58½ cords of wood	\$48.75
Care and providing for my father from May 1, 1846 to May 15, 1850	100.00
Nov. 1 Doctor's bill	10.37
Nov. 23 Funeral bill	11.50
Nov. 27 To appraise property	5.00
Nov. 30 Grave Stones	12.00
Six days service and expenses	12.00
	\$199.62

These expenses compare with the Personal Estate of \$157.

The cost of the care and providing for his father after the age of eighty is illuminating. It averages under 10 cents per day for food and care and illustrates the cultural pattern under which people lived before nursing homes, social security and medical insurance. The prices for the doctor, funeral and grave stones speak for themselves.

This will throw light on John Burgess, scion of the first Thomas, arriving on these shores in 1630. John was in the fourth generation after him, making a span of 220 years.

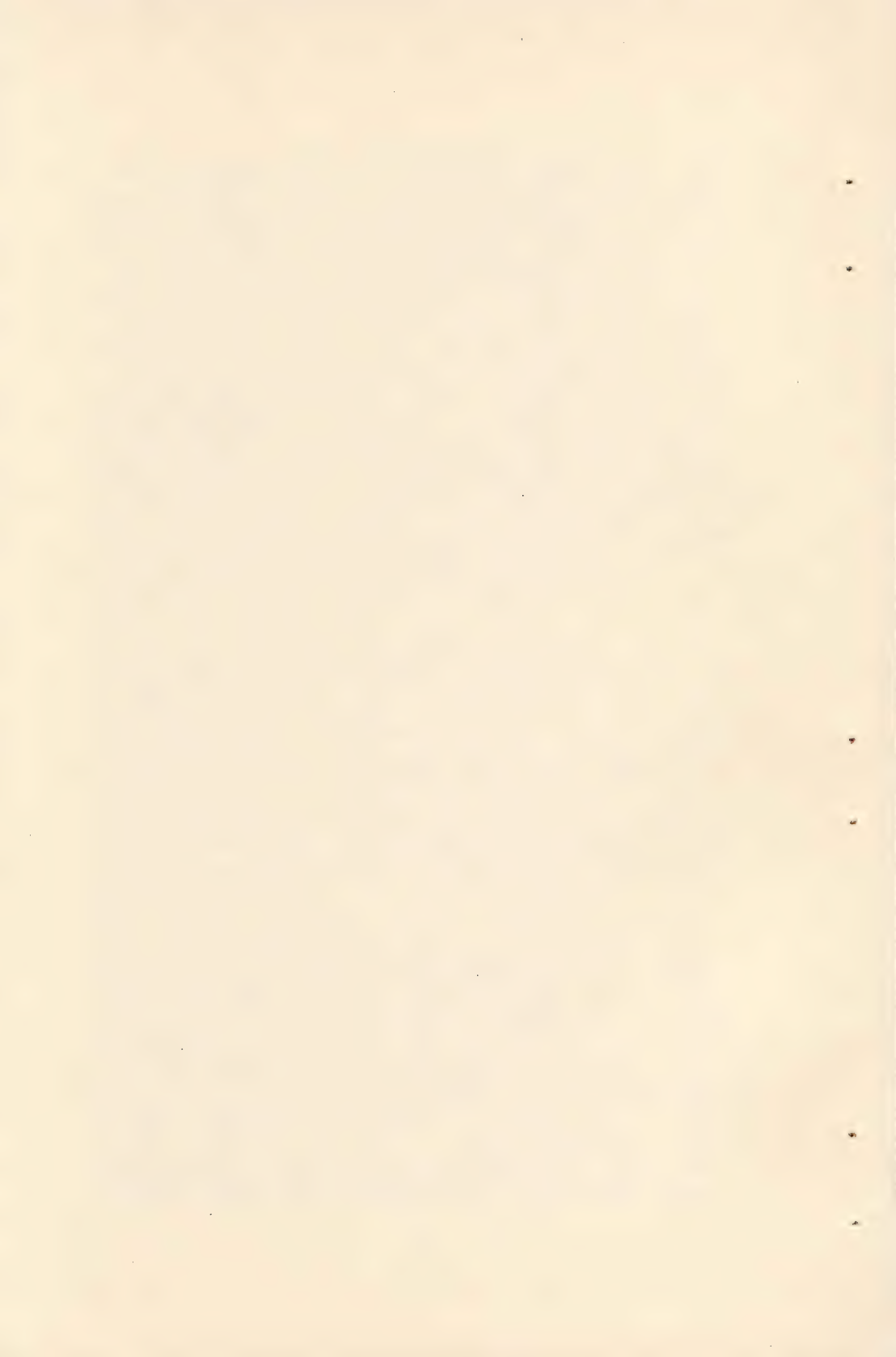


Knows all men by these presents, That
I Samuel Wright of Plymouth in the County
of Plymouth yeoman, In consideration of
Six hundred Dollars to me in hand paid
by John Burges of Plymouth aforesaid
yeoman, the receipt I acknowledge do
lay these presents, Sell & convey unto
him the said John Burges his heirs &
assigns forever, The whole of my homestead
land & buildings in Plymouth aforesaid
lying on the Easterly & Southwesterly side
of the great South pond, Containing eighty
acres more or less, being bounded Westerly
& Northerly & Southwesterly by said South
pond, & Southeasterly by Balcher Mantons
land & bounded northeasterly by land
improved by Henry Shickmon, being all
the land I own between South pond &
Burges meadows with my dwelling house
barn & all other buildings thereon, I appear
to the Record for a particular Description
thereof, Excepting about one acre of land
which lies now within Balcher meadows
which said Mantons is to have, To have &
hold, the above premises with all the
privileges & appurtenances to the same
belonging To him the said John Burges his
heirs & assigns forever, hereby Covenanting
that I the said Samuel Wright am the
lawfull owner of said premises and
that they are free from all incumbrances
That I might formerly be or was
I give & give to him the said John Burges his heirs
& assigns forever, Against the lawfull claim
of any & all persons in the shere of
the said County of Plymouth, I seal my name
have hereunto set my hand & seal this 30th
day of March 18th eighteen hundred one, at
Salem Seal of Seal
In presence of

Sarah Cotton
Samuel Wright

Samuel Wright
Sarah Wright

th 1801. Then personally appeared Samuel Wright
of Plymouth County in the County of Plymouth
& acknowledged this instrument by him to be his act & deed
before the said Sarah Cotton Just. Peace



CHAPTER XI.

THE COMMUNITY: NEARBY, AND BEYOND

In the 1790's the total population of the town of Plymouth had grown to 3500 people. By today's standards this seems to be slow growth, averaging an increase of about 200 people per year since 1620. After the first growth of the early decades Plymouth settled into a slow growth rate until recent times, partly because economic growth and settlements flourished elsewhere. Much of the area then could be called a basically rural countryside.

There was a small village for the South Ponds area near the present small chapel, located at the beginning of the road into the South Pond Cemetery. The early Burgess and other settlers are buried there.¹

It may be assumed from perusal of deeds and a general acquaintance of the area that it had acreage with enough meadow, upland and woodland to provide a basis for a livelihood of varying quality from the land.

There was a school established in South Pond village in 1796. In this year the town voted \$850.00 to maintain all the schools of the town, mostly primary and grammar schools for young males. Earlier, in 1793, the town voted to establish female schooling, based on six months per year, with one teacher and one session being held for them one hour in the forenoon and one hour in the afternoon at the close of the regular daily sessions. Discrimination against girls, obviously, but at least a start was made.

The South Pond schoolhouse is now converted into a dwelling house beside the chapel. Nearby is another schoolhouse also converted into a dwelling house. The S. Bourne map of

Plymouth in 1830 shows a school location on the road near the junction of the watercourse and the stream from Finney's meadow which later becomes Eel River.

The homesteads in the area toward the end of the eighteenth century included those of Samuel Wright-John Burgess and that of Belcher Manter, as well as Jonathan Holmes. South of the chapel were other Burgess dwellings and that of Nathaniel Thomas. These locations are near the third share of the sixth great lot and near the fourth share at Gunner's Exchange Pond. One of the Nathaniel Thomases served in the Revolution. The Joshua Wright homestead was in the vicinity.

The road northeast to Plymouth center was approximately five miles long for the horse-drawn team or carriage. The Burgess Road followed along not far from the eastern shore of South Pond. The roads were selected for as much lack of grade as possible to avoid hills for horses and teams. The Baptist Road continued south to College Pond and then west to Carver. Settled land in this area was not common. There were some farms near Bloody and Half-Way Ponds. Long Pond Road went through South Pond village, later crossing Mast Road at the Four Corners. It went eventually southward beyond Herring Pond to Sandwich.

Belcher Manter had a homestead built probably during the last quarter of the eighteenth century one mile north of the Burgess homestead near the shore of South Pond. Near his house a stream called Watercourse began at the Pond and flowed downhill east through his property and eventually joining a stream from Finney's Meadow to Russell Mill Pond and Eel River to the ocean.

The cut fieldstone sides of this stream can still be seen near the site of the house. There was a grist mill on this stream, as mentioned in old deeds. The Watercourse has now largely dried up

except in periods of very high water in South Pond, since the 1850's a source of Plymouth's water supply.

In his history Wm. Davis states that this outlet for South Pond was not alluded to in the early records, thus confirming the tradition that it was an artificial brook dug under the direction of Elder Thomas Faunce in 1701. Elder Faunce was the son of John, who came on the *Ann*, 1623, and was born in 1647. From 1685 to 1723, Thomas Faunce, the worthy elder of the church, held the office of town clerk and kept the town records.

In the 1780's there was a town effort made to get alewives to come from the ocean up into the Watercourse and into South Pond for spawning. Some sections of the stream were dug and deepened, but I could find no evidence that the project ultimately succeeded.^{1a}

The first Belcher Manter, 1736-1825, came from neighboring Wareham to the south. By his second marriage to Rebecca Palmer he had a son, the second Belcher, 1776-1857. This second Belcher married Sarah Wright in 1799, probably the daughter of Joshua Wright who had a homestead in the vicinity.

Their family is close to the John and Phineas Burgess families, since Phineas was one of the administrators of the second Belcher's estate. The daughter of Phineas Burgess, Ruth Anna, married Benjamin B. Manter. She was the girl who planted the maple tree now thriving in front of the barn here and lived for 105 years, until 1956.

The Belcher Manter house also provided the north ell on the front of the Burgess dwelling. This ell had been moved here and attached at an early date. Its foundation stones at its original site match the dimensions of the ell here. This account was given me by Susan Burgess.

The event we consider so important, the American Revolution, has little concerning it recorded about the South Pond community except for some names of members of families we are familiar with and their relation to it. Henry Richmond was the owner of the homestead during that time until 1783 when the crisis had passed. Perhaps the proximity of the events that aroused the Boston area were, in the geography of the time, a little remote for close involvement by the rural area of Plymouth.

There are the names of a few men associated with the South Pond community who served in the war of the American Revolution recorded in the Veterans Administration files in the Plymouth Town Office Building.

Nathaniel Carver, who bought a piece of land on the west shore of the pond from Samuel Wright enlisted on June 6, 1776 and served until August 26, 1779. He served in both the army and navy and was on the sloop *Reprisal* as well as in the Plymouth Fifth Company Regiment.

John Churchill, 1745-1779, was lost at sea. He enlisted on May 28, 1776.

Col. Theophilus Cotton, 1716-1782, was a colonel of the First Plymouth Company. He enlisted on June 5, 1775, and was discharged March 31, 1781. Joshua Cotton, son of the third John, 1753-1829, enlisted in the colonel's regiment and served for three and one half months.

Nathaniel Thomas, 1756-1838, of a family with a homestead in this region was a member of Captain Peleg Wadsworth's company.

Wadsworth, Harvard class of 1769, the year Henry Richmond built the homestead, was a teacher in a private school in Plymouth in 1769, served in the Revolution and was captured by the British during the period. He is the grandfather of the poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Mr. Lewis Wadsworth, Jr., a Boot Pond resident, is in the same Wadsworth family.

The surrounding community also had a wider community beyond, economic and other forces of which had an impact on the lives of the people of the South Pond region.

To increase our understanding of some of the influences of the people in this chronicle I have found a reading of Wm. T. Davis's *Plymouth Memories of an Octogenarian* to be a source of illumination. His dates are 1822-1907. Accurate and charmingly written by an aware mind it has many delightful and human passages as well. I am indebted to his granddaughter, Ruth Gardner Steinway, for lending me her copy. I have chosen various subjects that he had taken up, showing influences on the Plymouth community during most of the nineteenth century. We can follow such matters as fishing, shipping, transportation, stage coaches, postal service, railroads, and finally the anti-slavery movement. A way of life was followed then very different from our present technological society.

We may look back upon whaling with some romantic nostalgia. Plymouth did have some whale fishery in the first half of the century, providing employment and adventure for some of the townspeople.² Whales were in Massachusetts Bay, but no serious efforts were made to engage in their capture. In 1821, however, a company was formed to prosecute this fishery. In this year the ship *Mayflower* of 345 59-95 tons sailed for the Pacific, was absent for three years and landed between two and three

thousand barrels of oil. She made two more Pacific voyages, landing about five thousand barrels.

In 1822 another company was formed, built the bark *Fortune* of 278 47-95 tons. She returned from the Pacific in 1825 with two thousand barrels. She made five voyages through 1840, the year of her last voyage.

Other ships sailing in the whale fishery were the *Arabella*, of 404 26-95 tons, 1830; the *Levant* of 332 34-95 tons, 1831; the *Triton* of 314 49-95 tons, 1833, and the bark *Mary and Martha* of 316 56-95 tons, 1838. All these sailed the Pacific.

In 1833 the brig *Yeoman*, afterwards changed to a bark, was built in Plymouth. It made several voyages to the South Atlantic. The schooner *Marcaibo*, 93 53-95 tons, built in Plymouth, engaged in Atlantic fishery and was lost off Bermuda in 1846. The schooner *Exchange* of 99 91-95 tons, made four voyages and was wrecked in West Indian waters. Two other vessels engaged in whale fishery were the schooner *Mercury* of 74 34-95 tons and the schooner *Vesper* of 95 53-95 tons.

“In 1803 the foreign trade of Plymouth was at the height of its prosperity. In that year it was carried on by seventeen ships, sixteen brigs and forty schooners, and the duties paid into the Plymouth Custom House amounted to nearly one hundred thousand dollars.”³

The embargo act of 1807 and the war of 1812 brought this activity to a permanent decline.

Of the captains commanding such vessels, Davis mentions some with the name of Burgess: Chandler, John, Lewis, William W. and Winslow.

Cod fishery was active and successful.⁴ From 1765 to 1775 an average of 65 vessels per year were employed. In 1802 there were 37 vessels engaged, employing 265 men, landing 26,175 quintals (hundred weight) of codfish. All but six of these vessels made two trips yearly. Among the skippers he lists there is Nathaniel Clark, possibly a one time owner of the homestead. He was of the *Benjamin Church* of 70 tons which produced 350 quintals of codfish.

All those of us who love to eat lobster and regret their present and future scarcity and high cost will enjoy this account telling of Sam and Joseph Burgess:⁵

“In the angle where the T joined the main wharf, there was a flight of substantial steps, where boats at all times could land, drawing not over two feet of water. This was a great convenience, enabling Sam Burgess, with his fish for the market, lobster boats from the Gurnet, and the Island and Saquish boats, to land without regard to the stage of the tide. Many a householder with his mouth made up for a fish dinner has sat by the hour together at the head of those steps, waiting for Sam. In those days, too, the purveyor of lobsters was Joseph Burgess, the keeper of the light, and as regular as the day he would appear with his lobsters and wearing his red thrum cap, would wheel his barrow full about the town. There was no talk then of short lobsters, nor of extravagant prices, for nine pence, or twelve and a half cents in the currency of the time, would buy a three or four pound lobster.”

During his lifetime, of thirteen packets in service Davis remembers the last eight very well.⁶ These ships carried merchandise and some passengers on runs to Boston, using sail. The

last packet with passenger service was the schooner *Russell*. She survived the advent of the railroad in 1845. Her fate was a sad one. On March 17, 1854, on a return from Boston, she drifted off course and went ashore at Billingsgate Light on Cape Cod, southeast from the Gurnet. The schooner was a total wreck and all on board were lost. She had a captain and three crew members and five passengers. The bodies came ashore at Wellfleet and Truro. Davis, as administrator of Capt. Simmons' estate, had to identify them and arrange for their removal to Plymouth.

A steamboat line was established with the advent of the *General Lafayette*,⁷ in 1828. She left Plymouth when the tide served, and left Boston at hours which on her arrival would enable her to reach her dock. The fuel was wood and she made the passage in five hours, making about eight and one half statute miles per hour. In 1830 the steamboat *Rushlight* came to Plymouth and advertised to carry passengers to Boston for a dollar and a quarter, the fare by stage being two dollars.

In 1840, the *Hope* left Boston at two, reaching Plymouth at six. Wm. Davis tells of an incident that year. He took a stage which left the same time as the ship. The driver, Samuel Gardner, told Davis that he would beat the steamboat that day. Gardner did not leave the box, horses were ready at the three places where changes were made and, "as I dismounted at my mother's house on Cole's Hill the boat passengers were coming up the wharf." That day the stage did thirty six miles in four hours.

In 1801, Davis quotes the *Farmer's Almanac*, there were twenty five lines of stagecoaches running out of Boston.⁸ The stage to Plymouth made three trips per week by the way of Hingham, being ten hours on the road. The New England stage in the early part of the nineteenth century was a long covered wagon hung on leather thorough-braces and contained seats without backs. "After

a few years the clumsy stage gave way to the well-known English stage made with the addition of a middle seat with an adjustable tack strap.”⁹

In 1834 a line of stages to and from Boston for mail and passengers was established and continued until the opening of the Old Colony Railroad in 1845. The accommodation left Plymouth at six or seven each day, and returning left Boston by two. By way of Pembroke, Hanover, Weymouth Landing, Quincy and Dorchester was the route up from Plymouth. The mail stage, when separate, left Boston at five o'clock in the morning, arriving at Plymouth at ten thirty.

The first post office and postmaster were established in 1775 in Plymouth.¹⁰ In this year a horseback mail route was established from Cambridge to Falmouth through Plymouth. The two post riders made the trip down and back once a week.

On March 18, 1844, the Old Colony Railroad was incorporated.¹¹ On the 8th of November, 1845 the road was opened. The next day trains ran twice daily at 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. from Plymouth and 7:45 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. from Boston. Running time was an hour and three quarters. The rail road for the next twenty years used wood for fuel. The distance was 37 miles.

The population of Plymouth in 1820 was 4384. In 1833 it was 5,000. By 1905 it had reached 11,107.

A moral and political situation, slavery and the abolitionist movement, had an impact on the Plymouth community. Wm. T. Davis has written about some aspects of the attitudes in Plymouth. His observations have a special validity because he gathered them during his active public life as lawyer, banker, historian, writer and political leader while the storm clouds were gathering.

We know that in the family tradition Charlotte Burgess, in particular was sympathetic to the cause of freedom for the blacks. Strong and moving words on slavery were contained in the eloquent address by a young Daniel Webster, 1782-1852, to the Pilgrim Society dinner in 1820, the occasion being the commemoration of the landing two hundred years previously.

“It is not fit that the land of the Pilgrims should bear the shame longer. I hear the sound of the hammer; I see the smoke of the furnace where manacles and fetters are still forged for human limbs. I see the visages of those who by stealth and midnight labor in this work of hell and dark, as may become the artificers of such instruments of misery and tortures. Let that spot be purified, or let it cease to be of New England. Let it be purified or let it be set aside from the Christian world; let it be put out of the circle of human sympathies and human regards, and let civilized man henceforth have no communion with it.”¹²

From the assessor's records, Davis estimates there were fifty slaves of all ages in Plymouth in 1740. He lists many of these slaves and their owners.¹³ When the Massachusetts Constitution was adopted in 1780 slavery was forbidden. In 1781 the supreme judicial court of Massachusetts so decided in the case of Walker vs. Jennison. Davis cites a case of a slave in which his grandfather had a part.¹⁴

“It is not improbable that Plymouth was associated with the first claim made on a citizen of Massachusetts for the restoration of a slave to his master. Information concerning it I found among my grandfather's papers. In 1808 the brig *Thomas*,

Solomon Davie master, at some port in Delaware, received on board a slave who had deserted from his master, David M. McIlvaine, and until 1812 remained in my grandfather's service, receiving wages as a hired man. In 1812 Mr. McIlvaine found the slave on board the brig in Baltimore, and a claim for his restoration being made, he was given up. In the meantime the slave who called himself George Thomson, bought a small house on the brow of Cole's Hill, and in a settlement of a suit to recover wages, which my grandfather had paid to Thomson, Mr. McIlvaine, in consideration of the money paid, conveyed to my grandfather the house, and the following articles of personal property which were in the keeping of a colored woman, named Violet Philips, and were the property of Thomson—a blue cloth coat, fine; a black cloth coat, fine; one pair of ribbed velvet pantaloons; one black bombazet waistcoat; one black silk waistcoat; three yellow marseilles waistcoats; one pair white stockings; two checked shirts; one new fur hat; one chest, and one trunk in which were the title papers to his house, and one silver watch."

Wm. T. Davis recounts the role of Borne Spooner, 1790-1870, born in Plymouth, and founder of the Plymouth Cordage Company in 1824, in the anti-slavery movement.¹⁵ Perhaps his younger days in New Orleans, learning the rope trade, had influenced him. Davis goes on to list the names of those citizens of Plymouth engaged in the movement.

"The merchants, professional men, including ministers, and the politicians in both the whig and

democratic parties, were either too timid to join the anti-slavery ranks, or were decidedly hostile to the anti-slavery movement. An anti-slavery meeting held on the evening of July 4, 1835, in the Robinson church, which was disturbed by an incipient mob which contented itself with breaking a few windows, and afterwards smearing with tar the dry goods sign of Deacon Ripley. Though the *Old Colony Memorial* contained a paid advertisement of the meeting, its columns were silent concerning its doings and the disturbance. It is of little consequence how or when Mr. Spooner became interested in the movement. He became one of the most prominent men in the state, supporting it, and undoubtedly furnished to it material aid not exceeded in amount by the contributions of any others in its ranks. He was a constant friend and supporter of Garrison, Phillips, Quincy and Douglas, all of whom frequently enjoyed the hospitalities of his home."

"The seed of anti-slavery fell in Plymouth on sandy soil, but watered by heavenly dew, it soon took root and broke through the conservation crust which under the influence of the commercial and financial interests of the town, for a time obstructed its growth."¹⁶

Wm. Davis relates a vivid account of Jonathan Walker, a fellow townsman, and his anti-slavery experience.¹⁷

"I suppose that few of my readers know that Johnathan Walker, the man with the branded hand, ever lived in Plymouth. About fifty years ago, or

perhaps a little earlier, he lived in the house now standing in what is called the Nook at the head of the waters of Hobb's Hole brook. I do not remember to have ever seen him, but I recall the time when he was complained of for shingling his house in the Sabbath. He was born in Harvard, Mass., March 22, 1799, and at the age of seventeen went to sea. When quite young he assisted Benjamin Lundy in colonizing slaves in Mexico, and for a time lived with his family in Florida. In 1844 he assisted four slaves to escape by water, but was overtaken and captured with his companions by a Revenue Cutter which was sent in pursuit. He was carried to Pensacola, and after a trial for his offense was sentenced to stand one hour in the pillory, to pay a fine of one hundred and fifty dollars, and be branded on the hand with the letters S.S., signifying slave stealer. It is creditable to Southern humanity that a blacksmith refused to heat the instrument of torture. He remained in prison eleven months in default of payment of the fine, and then by the aid of Northern friends released. After his release he delivered lectures in various Northern towns and then settled down in Plymouth. . . . He left behind in Plymouth a son John, whom I knew very well, and whom it fell to me once to aid during a pecuniary embarrassment. His father had neglected his education, but he was a noble fellow in whose presence I always felt that I was in the presence of a man.

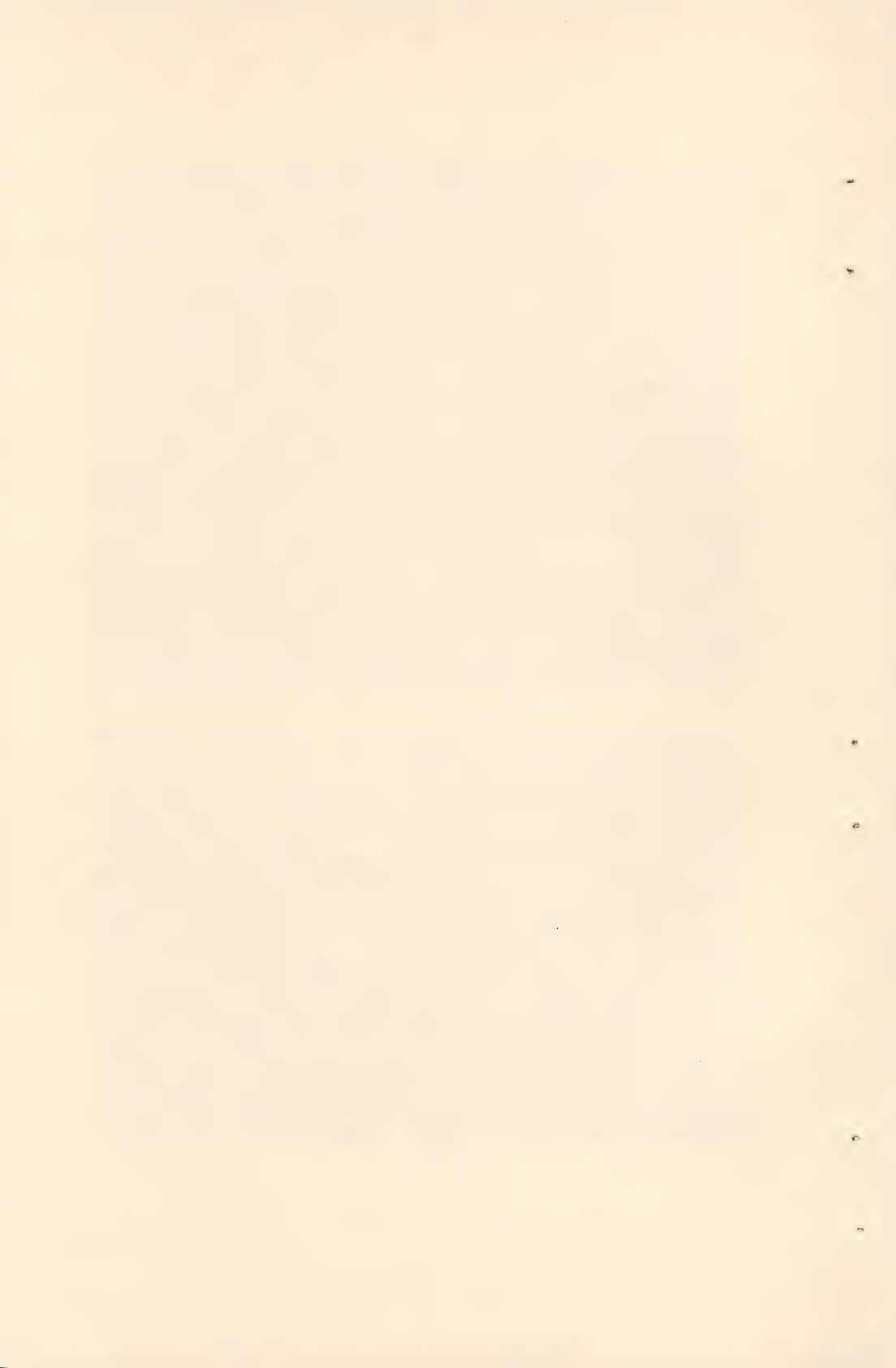
"I think he was one of not more than twenty men whose personality during my long life has impressed me. He always would call me William and I

always called him John. I would have entrusted to him my life in any emergency, for I knew that he would have risked his own to save the life of a fellow man."

Among the Plymouth men killed during the Civil War was Nathaniel Burgess, wounded at Fort Steadman, March 25, 1865, died of wounds in July, 1865.¹⁸

We now go on to the Burgess family, Phineas and Charlotte, whose lives span the nineteenth century and who spent most of their times at the Boot Pond Place in farming and raising eight children. We have photographs of them and information about their daily lives that is not similarly available for Nathaniel and John of previous generations. So time observed begins to move closer to the present. Our imaginations are assisted by reminiscences and we see more clearly what took place here long ago.





CHAPTER XII

PHINEAS BURGESS, 1807-1890

Phineas, son of the second John, bought the homestead from his father at age 27 in 1831. He spent his eighty three years mostly at Boot Pond, except in Middleboro for a period as a young man.

He married Charlotte Thomas, 1812-1903, who had been a school teacher there. She was the daughter of Ezra Thomas. Ezra Thomas, the father of Charlotte, came from Edinburg, Scotland, so the family tradition runs, and had been wealthy. His first wife was an English lady. He had several children by his second wife, Lucy Sturdevant of Carver, Mass. Sometime during his life in Middleboro the family fortunes were lost. Some of the daughters removed to Lawrence, Massachusetts, and worked in the textile mills there.] *errata - see page 121. add in hical*

Charlotte was affectionately known as Aunt Charlotte. From the 1850's through the 1870's with the help of neighboring housewives from South Pond village she offered clambakes, picnics and luncheons at the Boot Pond homestead for various social organizations that were popular and well attended. Mary Burgess mentioned that her grandmother, Charlotte, was very fond of lilacs and planted clumps of them around the house and barn. These same clumps of great age are now found in four different spots and bring fragrant blossoms each May. She said her grandmother would refer to them as *lill-acs*.

Phineas and Charlotte Burgess had the following children:

Phineas Franklin, b.1833, Isaac Sturdevant, 1835-1925, Ezra Thomas, 1837-1924, Peleg Sprague, 1840-1931, Charlotte Thomas,

1847-1876, Ruth Anna, 1851-1956. In the photograph from left to right they are Peleg, Ruth Anna, Ezra, Isaac, Phineas, Franklin, Charlotte died at age 29.

Writing in the *Pilgrim Society Notes*, #13, August 1963, Margaret Kyle describes the picnics held at the Burgess place at Great South Pond.

"That was a favorite spot for an all day affair. A summer was not complete without such a picnic. It was *the* event of the season. If company was to be invited for a visit, the invitation waited until the date of the next Burgess Place picnic. Just before the Fourth was the usual day. Up the winding road through the pine woods the carryalls went, barges, too, full of young people, the horses with indigo tucked into their bridles to keep the flies off.

"In those good old days Plymouth 'had itself to itself.' Each family took its own silver (one had a great time sorting it afterwards) and good food of all sorts was tucked under the carriage seats. Marm Burgess was 'Aunt Charlotte' to everyone—the chowder was entirely her affair and oh! the savor of its cooking in great washboilers as twelve o'clock approached. There were endless things to do at the Burgess Place—fishing, blue-berrying, croquet, rowing, ball playing, wading, games for young and old. But nothing compared to the moment when the yard began to hum with activity back and forth around the long tables set out under the trees, and the chowder appeared.

"Once, when the company was all assembled, a sudden shower came up. Such a flurry and consternation! One of the 'Hobshole Boys' seized the steaming caldron at his end of the long table and ran with it into the house crying: In the name of Cromwell, fear God, and keep your *chowder* dry!"

"The guest books of those 'Jolly Jamborees' picnics at the Burgess Place are worn lined old ledgers dating back almost a hundred years. The records range from grandfathers and great-grandfathers, the children of long ago, just able to print with their hands held. Down to the very present the records run, for the Burgess Place and hospitality holds wide its doors."

The journals and guest books kept of those enjoying the outings were recently given to Pilgrim Hall by Mary Burgess. Susan Burgess told my son, Daniel, in 1960 that in a snowy winter when they were courting, Phineas and Charlotte had their sleigh turned over on a trip from Middleboro, but neither were injured. There is a picture of them at the house taken outside by the big apple tree, Charlotte with a spinning wheel and Phineas sitting beside her reading. He has abundant hair and lower beard. This photo was probably taken in 1885. It was done by Harvey Burgess, brother of Minnie Burgess, both children of Isaac Burgess, she has told me. Harvey Burgess was of the class of 1883 at Plymouth High School.

Ruth Anna, 1851-1956, a centenarian, married Benjamin B. Manter, later a lighthouse keeper. A major contribution of hers to the Burgess Place was the planting of the swamp maple tree in front of the barn when she was a young girl, according to Mary Burgess. It is now of massive size and majestic in character.

During his long life at the homestead, Phineas Burgess led the life of a countryman. He and his family experienced and had to accept long or short winters, dry or wet summers, early or late springs and continue to overcome the vagaries of nature which could be severe in some years for those deriving their livelihood from the land. The rains, the winds and sun were a close part of living. He could work the soil, tend his animals, raise crops and berries, harvest ice from the Pond into his icehouse located on the shore, shear the wool of sheep for clothes, and provide for his



family with their help. He did not have the creature comforts of our present technological society, but there were rewards for living close to nature at its best.

At this time soaps were made, using lye, from the grease and fats from farm animals. Aside from the use of ice from the Pond preserved with sawdust, butter and perishables could be kept cool in the summer in the well near the house.

To understand what families in the mid-nineteenth century had for crops to provide food and nourishment, I believe Ruth Tirrell, writing in the *Sunday New York Times* of January 13, 1974, provides accurate information. Her grandmother, now in her tenth decade, recalls the Rhode Island farm of her great grandmother, a span going back to the time of John Adams.

In the time of Grover Cleveland, farm crops were the same as in colonial days, the three sisters of the Indians—squash, beans, and corn. Johnnycakes, made on the griddle from the meal of white flint corn were served three times per day on the farm. Beans were “string” then, not “snap.” Salads were made from cucumbers and a coarse, curly lettuce, dressed with sugar and vinegar homemade from apples.

Beet greens were a staple, cooked with bacon. Beet roots were for fodder. Turnips were an important winter vegetable kept in the cellar. Squashes could be stored in the attic. Carrots were for cattle, but parsnips for people. Fertilizer was manure, horse, cow, sheep, pig and fowl—“organic,” like all farms once. Tomatoes, the “love apple” of the French, were suspected to be poisonous in the first half of the century.

As at the Boot Pond Place, raspberries, strawberries, currants could be combined in pies and preserves for a marvelous

sweet-acid taste. Apple slices were dried on racks for winter pies. Some varieties would last until spring in barrels of leaves in a cool shed.

Peaches, high bush blueberries, wild fox grapes were nearby, as were wild cranberries.

The high holiday was Thanksgiving. "Except for sugar, salt, tea and white flour for pie crust, nothing on the table was 'bought.'" Christmas was not celebrated on the farm according to the custom of colonial ancestors which survived until mid-century.

For heat the house had a central chimney with two fireplaces. Iron stoves replaced fireplaces early on as local bog iron and its technology became known. They are a vastly more efficient heat source. In Taunton an iron foundry was established in 1655. One began in Pembroke as early as 1648. Carver had bog iron deposits. The stoves were considered of enough value to be listed in early inventories of estate. Later in Plymouth, the Plymouth Iron Foundry on Water Street began making stoves in the 1860's.

There have been some conclusions about certain aspects of family life pointed out by John Demos in his fascinating studies in *A Little Commonwealth* that throw light on practices observed in the continuity of such families as the Churchills, Richmonds, Wrights and Burgesses.

He explains that the average number of children per couple of eight or nine apiece was quite standard in the seventeenth century. It seems to me it continued probably in a not greatly different way one hundred years later. A basic conviction was that the purpose of marriage was procreation, even if other considerations were not openly emphasized. Children could ultimately bring

economic benefits to the family as a whole, not forgetting the more important benefits to the quality of life such as mutual love and affection, care, security in old age, barriers against loneliness and the like.

There was no birth control as we know it. The fact that all babies were generally breast fed naturally provided a two year interval between births. In contrast with today's average of mothers having their last baby at age 26, couples in the Colony might have a full-grown son or daughter about to marry and an infant at the mother's breast all under the same roof. This fact gave a gradualness to the lives of siblings along the way and a chance to absorb family culture and to come of age by gradual stages.

The mortality rate between birth and maturity is suggested by the evidence as 25% or possibly less. This is very high by comparison with our own one percent, producing obvious sorrows. As for life expectancy, for example, a male of 21 years could expect to reach an age of 69.2 years and a female of 62.4 years, indicating the losses for women in childbirth, estimating that one birth in thirty resulted in the death of the mother. *A Little Commonwealth*, p. 66. Yet we must realize the perpetual pregnancies for some women were a hard fact of life.

So we can see some of the reasons why, although the families we speak about had large numbers in each generation, they were able to provide for them. They were able to bring the children to maturity in part because of the opportunities that lay at hand, in the accessibility of new lands, inheritance, farming, and a type of life that required self-sufficiency. The possibility of "growth" was a part of the spirit of the times.

We might recount at this point the number of children in the seven Burgess generations in the direct line from the first Thomas to Peleg.

First Thomas	5 plus others
Second Thomas	1
Third Thomas	13
Nathaniel	11
John	12
Phineas	6
Peleg	8
	56

This is an average of eight children per generation.

I have had conversations with Mary Burgess, then aged 87, about her recollections about her grandparents' life at the Pond. She remembers more of her grandmother Charlotte, being 18 at the time of her death in 1903, and also because she lived her last years in the Plymouth home of her son, Peleg.

She said her grandparents were dedicated abolitionists before the Civil War, Charlotte in particular. There had been centers of such activity on North Street and on Clark's Island. They had local black people working at the homestead for helping with the crops and the growing of all sorts of berries, such as raspberries and strawberries for sale in the markets.

Each summer Indians from farther south at the Cape came to South Pond and lived out in the vicinity of Pinnacle Hill across the Pond. They would travel by canoe to work by day. Some of the activities for the Indian women included spinning and weaving on looms in the attic for making cloth and related items. They had good numbers of sheep for the purpose. In the spring upon arrival the Indians would bring quantities of herring from the spawning in fresh water streams for gifts to the family.

The Indians in the area at the time of the arrival of the settlers belonged to the Wampanoag tribe, a member of the group designated as Algonquins. She said the Indians buried in graves in South Pond cemetery had presumably died from small pox epidemics.

She told me about her ^{Thomas} grandparents. They lived in Middleboro at an early time in their marriage. Phineas was a member of the Middleboro School Committee; Charlotte was a school teacher. They had a young girl as a servant who grew up in the family, ^{born in 1760} ~~probably in the 1850's~~ She learned from the other family children ways in which to be productive and self-reliant, such as weaving cloth from wool, making her own clothes, learning to read and write and the like.

The girl, at the time of the ^{Revolutionary} ~~Civil~~ War, made herself a soldier's uniform, posed as a male, enlisted, and served during the war. Afterward she got married and lived in Middleboro. Mary Burgess has told me that she thinks the "bounded servant," as she refers to her, was named Deborah Sampson. 1760-1827

Raising other people's children in one's family was not an uncommon custom. The reason for its prevalence is explored in an extended account of the whole custom in the John Demos book, *A Little Commonwealth*. The term "servant" as we now understand it is not an accurate indication of what took place from the early days of the Colony well into the early part of the nineteenth century.

It was an extension of the concept of family that for the most part benefited those who came to the family and also those in the immediate family. It was widely practiced and accepted and was regulated by judicial decisions when necessary to prevent injustices. There is a great deal of evidence in wills and court

decisions that the custom provided security and a sense of identity for the many involved. It is estimated that ten percent of the children in families in an earlier time lived with families other than their own for care, upbringing, education at home in a more worthwhile manner than possible in their own families. The prevailing view had been that a child was a miniature adult and from the age of eight years on he was ready to begin assuming responsibilities. The void caused by a leap into a world outside his immediate family was largely filled by the kind of nurture in a family group other than his own. Many circumstances could bring about such a situation, like the death of one or more parents, real poverty, family conflicts, opportunities to learn a trade, shifts from an illiterate family to one with the capability to provide home instruction in reading and writing. Possibly some families had more children than they could properly rear and were willing to let other families who could offer more take a child in.

The Burgess family members, during the time of Phineas Burgess and his sons, took an active part in the formation of the Union Evangelical Society at South Pond village and the building of the present chapel there in 1870.

Phineas Burgess's son Isaac, 1835-1924, and brother of Peleg, 1840-1931, gave part of the land near his dwelling house at the time for the location of the chapel. His relative, William Burgess, also owned land adjoining the proposed chapel location and also gave a portion of his land for the site. It was located where a "private way leading to the burying hill called the burying hill road makes a junction with said main road."

The joint gift is recorded in the deed of Book 367, Page 214, December 15, 1870, signed by Isaac and Ruth Burgess, William and Lucy L. Burgess.



There are two significant convictions stated in this deed:

“If meeting house taken for debt or any change made from the Union Evangelical Church as it stands at this date the lot to go back to the former owners or heirs, also that the women of the society shall have equal rights with the men in holding offices and voting in other affairs.”

The present and long-time president of this church Society is the still active Miss Minnie Burgess, aged 94, daughter of Isaac. She has been one of its continuous benefactors. Services are held weekly each Sunday during the summer and she is an active participant. I recently attended a moving service conducted by Rev. Peter Gomes. The singing of the congregation was a delight.

The Chapel itself has simplicity and the charm of long ago. It may remind one of a Shaker interior, with wooden settees, clear glass windows with gothic type upper arch, small pulpit in the front, and a black cast iron, flat topped wood burning stove of the 1870 period. There is an unusual large recessed dome in the center ceiling.

Miss Minnie Burgess has kindly let me examine a handwritten account in her possession of the early days of the Chapel by her aunt, Ruth Anna Manter, of an account she wrote and read in the Chapel about 1940.

“Before the years 1865-1867 the people living in this neighborhood held their meetings in the school house. Services were well attended and they had a Sunday School.

“In the year 1868 they began to talk about building this Chapel. The women formed a sewing society,

quilting bed quilts and doing other kinds of work.

"The lot was given by I. S. Burgess who owned a house on the South Side where the Chapel now stands. There was a big rock on his land which they blasted to make the underpinning for the Chapel. Sylvanus W. Burgess having charge of that work, I. S. Burgess being head carpenter. Seth Burgess, Henry Sampson, Braman Bennett, Phineas Burgess, Truman Sampson, William Pierce, George Manter, Seth Bennett were some of the helpers.

"As near as I can remember the chapel was ready for use in 1874 or 5.

"This history is written by Ruth Manter who seems to be the only one to remember what took place here 71 years ago.

Signed
Ruth A. Manter."

Miss Minnie Burgess also possesses a record book of the organizing of the Society, *Plymouth, South Ponds, Apr. 4, 1870. Reckords of the Organization of the Union Evangelical Society.* The names listed give an indication of some of the families living in the South Pond village area at the time.

Expressing a desire to be legally organized, the undersigned were:

Isaac Burgess
Seth Burgess
William Burgess
Sylvanus Sampson

Sylvanus S. Bennett
Chriss Bennett
Solomon Holmes
Nelson L. Sampson

Sylvanus W. Burgess
Truman Sampson
Aaron Sampson
Henry H. Sampson
Barzilla Holmes
Frederick Burgess
Seth Bassett

Gustavus G. Sampson
Charlotte Burgess
Ruth Burgess
Aseneth Sampson
Harriet L. Burgess
Sarah H. Burgess

At the meeting of December 8, 1870, Article 4 was adopted which explained the denominational constituency, a truly ecumenical move forward:

Free Will Baptists
Calvinist Baptists
Christian Baptists
Methodists
Congregationalists
Advent

At a meeting of March 6, 1871 the following women for the first time were admitted as members:

Charlotte Burgess (daughter of Phineas)
Ruth Burgess (wife of Isaac)
Aseneth Burgess
Harriet L. Burgess (wife of Phineas Franklin Burgess)
Charlotte T. Burgess (wife of Phineas)
Sarah H. Burgess (wife of Seth Burgess)

In 1874, Phineas Burgess, now 67 years old, who had actively farmed the property during his long life there, sold the property to his sons Phineas Franklin and Peleg, as recorded in Book 1552, Page 357. There was a provision for occupancy during his remaining lifetime. The price was \$2,000.00. The provision was

similar to that between John and Phineas in the previous generation. Peleg watched over and provided care for his parents until the end of their lives.

The next Burgess generation in our chronical, that of Peleg, marks a change. Although he was born at the Pond Place, he lived most of his life in Plymouth center. Yet he did keep close touch with the homestead, became the owner of it and held it until the last twelve years of his life.

Before leaving Phineas and Charlotte Burgess we offer an intimate glimpse of their times at the Pond Place, presenting a real treasure from a person who knew those times, wrote about them in imaginative and poetic prose, and as an artist pictured some scenes in watercolors.

Here follows the recollection by Susan Burgess of her grandparents' home in the form of a children's story. There is some background material in the notes for this section.¹



MEMORIES OF THE BOOT POND PLACE

By

SUSAN H. BURGESS



Long long ago before there were any automobiles and airplanes had not been thought of, when steam engines were considered very swift and steam boats were slow but sure, everybody had horses and carriages.

Then it was that a family of eight children lived in a small house hardly big enough to hold so many. Because their house was so small they lived out of doors most of the time.

There was room enough out of

doors in those days. The streets and roads into the country even were not crowded as they are now and people spent a great deal of time indoors. Horses got very tired travelling long distances over poor roads. People enjoyed riding then even as they do now, and this family of eight children used to love to drive with their father or mother through the woods over a crooked road to their grandparent's big farm house which stood between two lovely lakes. At every turn and bend in the



road were surprises or things to be remembered, from other drives such as the spots where the pinkest Mayflowers had been found in the spring or the birds nests or where a black snake had once crossed over, or where the biggest blueberries grew and best of all at the end of the trip at the last bend of the road the fun of seeing the farm house first and if you weren't the first to see the house perhaps with standing up you could be first to see the lakes. But even if you



didn't see any of the things first it was nice to see them any way the new and the old. There was always so much new to be found, new flowers, bugs, birds, berries and everything just lovely and woodsey and at grandfather's farm it was always a time for something- cherry time, strawberrie time or watermelon time and if it wasn't a time for a fruit or vegetable it was a party time like Thanksgiving-Christmas- or just a summer picnic, and always a happy time in such a happy place

Grandfather and Grandmother had horses and carriages but the horses travelled very slowly and the carryalls were covered and not like the democrat wagon the eight children were used to and liked because it was open and they could see so much. Buggy's and carryalls were not bad for old folks and rainy days. Hay wagons and truck carts were jolly fun and rides on the backs of fat farm horses from the field to barn were worth waiting for and then to slide off over the round fat side and to run

quickly from the hoofs that could sometimes kick. To run and offer a few whisps of hay or an apple as reward for the ride and not get nipped by those big rows of teeth, that was fun.

Grandmother was most always at home and busy, but pleased to have company, tho she didn't stop being busy for company. She would spin or weave or make cakes or pies and company could help and when dinner time came she said they



had earned their dinner. Such platters of fried fish, rye bread and Indian meal cakes and puddings with pumpkin pies so large and deep, a dinner to be earned and remembered. In cool weather there was wood to be brought in for the fireplace and children were handy in gathering pine cones to start a quick blaze. In warm weather sweet smelling green bay branches had to be picked to fill the fire places To keep flies and

mosquitoes from coming in through
The chimneys. There was butter
to churn and water to pump. There
were no faucets all the water
had to be pumped up from
wells. Grand mother was lame
and had to have many things
done for her. The floors were
uneven the boards were very
wide with big knots which
made bumps. Such floors
were hard on lame people
but to children it made just one
more thing different and better than

any other house. The stair ways were crooked too. There were four of them, the fourth leading to the big attic at the top of the house, a place where children could be forgotten for a while like all the other attic things. While the children were being forgotten they made the attic treasures live again. From hair chests, sea chests and boxes were dragged forth hoop skirts, bustles, bonnets, veils, mits, cloth shoes and costumes of stiff silk or stiffer calico or print



Following such a happy airing
of honorable and ancient treasures
swift and sure came discovery
and a quick exit while back with
skillful hands went the joys of
other days forbidden joys of
children's ways. The attic once
more resumed its quiet, broken
only by an angry wasp dashing
his wrath against a dusty
window pane. Retreating
footsteps down the stairs
and through the house with
an echo of chaqrin found



pause beside the pig pen and near tragedy was turned to comedy. The pig at grandmothers always had a lovely home with clean white-washed pen with fresh straw on the floor, a trumpet vine shading it, and the pig himself scrubbed clean every week. Still he would be a pig and would get into his trough feet and all. He enjoyed having his back scratched but his ears were ticklish.

Pig weed and sweet apples would tempt him to rise when first offered but he preferred to eat them lying down and a pig lying down isn't much fun to gather apples or pig weed for. The best time of all to visit the pig pen was when there was a litter of little pigs. How they could run and how they could squeal. Always up to little tricks it payed to fix a seat and stay and watch them for a while.

The big barn door was usually open wide. The hay from the mows was within easy reach of cows and horses in their stalls a fact to be noticed before taking a slide down one of them.

The barn had a shop with a bench and tools, big wooden planes, curious things for mending wagons and harness, a shoemaker's bench with a draw filled with wooden pegs and shoe lasts. There was



room for almost everything you could think of in the barn, and room enough too for almost every kind of a game you could think of to play rain or shine, and then when you were tired of play to come upon a family of pretty kittens in a hidden corner was a happy surprise.

The big barn door faced the road to town but the small door opposite it looked out into the orchard and the



lakes beyond. A vista of
alluring temptations,
fruit trees, berry bushes
kitchen garden, flowers and
last but not least the lakes
with boats and fishing and
sandy beach, not forgetting
the big swing in the big
oak tree. The ice house was
under the big oak. You could
play that goblins lived in
it, goblins that could fly out
the door so high up and
who didn't need any windows
[there weren't any windows]

It was hard to decide just what to play first down at the lakes. The big red boat, the middle sized white boat or the little green punt were such fun and the wharf that didn't reach out into the water deep enough and had to have a plank added to the end, a plank that teetered with too many on it.

The sand beach and the clear cool lake were

perhaps most tempting of all the temptations. Hours and hours of happy splashing and moulding of sand castles and sailing of ships with the sun shining hotly and the water swishing cool and clean around ones feet. To fall in all over was not that wrong, but rather a clumsy accident, and in winter when thin ice proved a temptation to daring skaters and the ice gave way it was also considered an act of very



poor judgement. The chilly bath scalding ginger tea and bed were enough punishment.

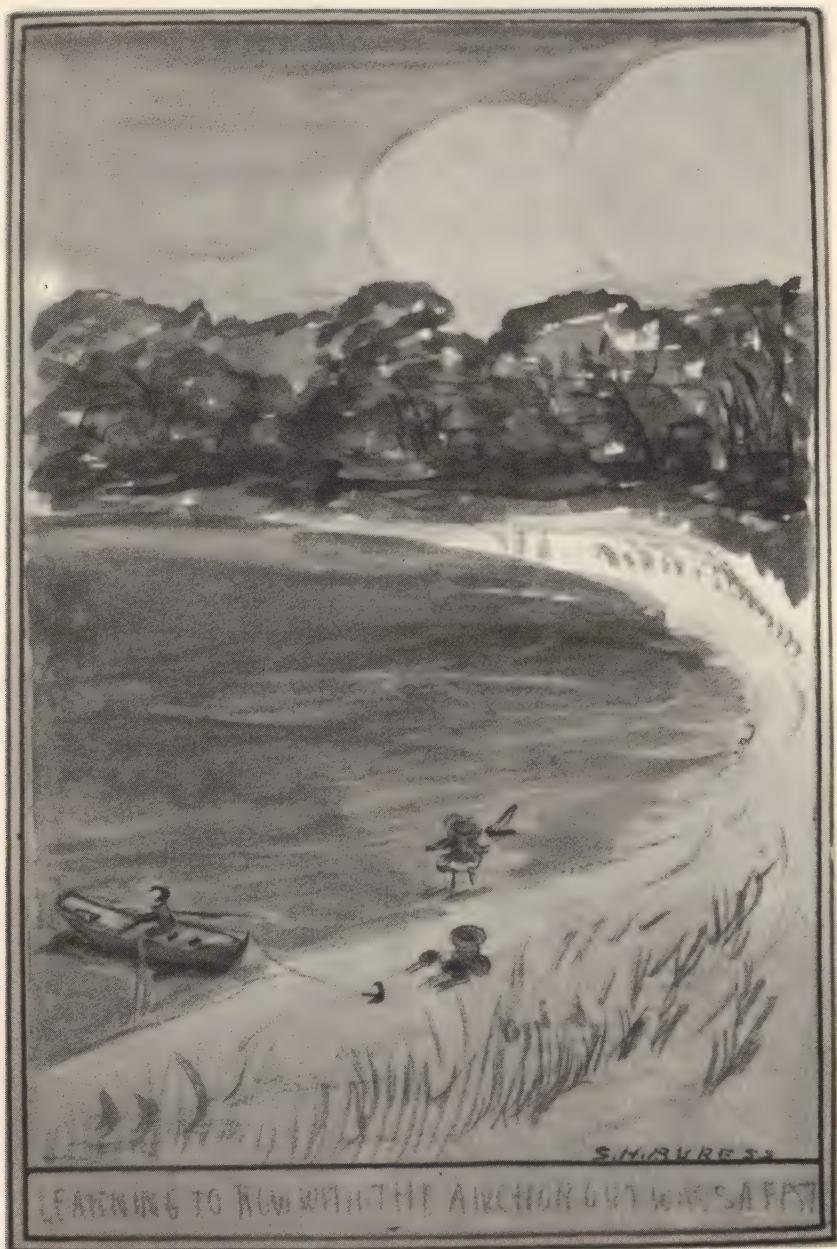
The swing in the oak tree was so near the lake that a big push would make it go out over it. The pusher could run down the bank to the water and it wasn't easy to keep from running right in. To swing higher and higher out over the water until your feet could touch the branches of the oak tree.



then to let the old cat die and your turn was up. Learning to row a boat with heavy oars was safest with the anchor out. It wasn't hard to learn and then there were coves to explore and thrilling adventures out of sight of house and farm. The Toot Toot toot of a real Fourth of July horn was the call to hasten home. Pulling oars on the home stretch was not so easy as going on the adventure.

The call of home while most always an interruption and an unwelcome one was usually in the end a pleasant experience especially at the end of a day of play. Cleaning up for supper meant clean hands and face and nails, shoes and stockings on again, hair brushed and voices suitable. It was nice to be ready and hungry for supper and it was nice to play a game of checkers after or to hear a good story read.

Bed time and dreams of other and better adventures to come and then the awaking to a new day. Like magic itself was the growing up of each child with each adventure forgetting yesterday, in dreams running to meet tomorrow, yet truly living every moment that passed. Rainy tomorrows were not spent in regret for lack of sun. Fish always bit best on rainy days and rubber



LEARNING TO ROW WITH THE AIRCRAFT WAS A FAST

boots and slickers were inventions fit for the imaginations of a lively family of eight to whom weather time and place were always right for living adventures.

Perhaps the crooked road the old house and barn and all they held, The woods the lakes and fields had much to do with making such a happy family, at any rate — there they were.





CHAPTER XIII. PELEG BURGESS

Peleg Burgess, 1840-1931, by purchase from his brother, Phineas Franklin Burgess, became the sole owner of the homestead and kept the property until October 17, 1918, when at the age of 78 he sold it to his children. In 1923, Book 1445, Page 428, it is recorded that it was granted back to him for his lifetime use when he had sold it to his four daughters, Annie, Charlotte, Susan and Mary and his son Harrison for \$300.00 each. Peleg's home on Union Street was sold in 1930 to these children and his son Walter, then of California, in addition.

As a young man, Peleg had wanted to be a sea captain and started training early in life. He spent some time in Bangkok, then Siam, during the Civil War, at the age of 22, because of ship movement problems brought on by the war. He brought back a large dictionary and many small art treasures from the Far East. He did not live regularly at the homestead, but his father Phineas did so.

At the age of 27 Peleg married Ann Jane Nicol, 1843-1891, on July 22, 1867. *Ann Jane Nicol*
see page 69

They had eight children: Annie Sprague, 1868-1956; Harrison Nicol, 1870-1954; Frances Allison, 1872-1896; Charlotte Jane, 1875-1934; Susan Howland, 1878-1968; and Mary Alma, born 1885.

Six years after the death of Ann Nicol in 1891, he married Henrietta Lavender of Provincetown in 1897.

During his career, Peleg lived for a time in Boston, where he was engaged in construction. In Plymouth he participated in

construction of Plymouth Cordage Company buildings and the original part of Jordan Hospital. He also built houses on Union Street where the family home is located. He played the violin well and served for a time as organist at the Baptist Church. He was proficient in carpentry, cabinet making and surveying.

During the latter part of his period of ownership at the Pond, after 1874, he sold small pond frontage lots from time to time, up to 15 or so in number for summer cottages or camps, as they are generally called. The small peninsula jutting into Boot Pond was sold to the Douglas family who built there a large summer home. Mary Burgess told me her father considered Mr. Douglas a pious man and would be sure to observe a quiet Sabbath. These sales provided perhaps needed revenue. Five hundred feet of Boot Pond shoreline was reserved for the use of the homestead.

Peleg's daughter Susan was born in Boston and was a graduate of the Boston Museum School of Fine Arts in modeling. She became a talented artist in several fields and taught art courses for many decades in the public schools of Hollywood, California, in its early days of prominence. Earlier she had won an award to be a student for four years of the sculptor Rodin in Paris. Her opportunity was not realized because of World War I. She excelled in many fields, in sketches, painting, sculpture, wood carving, ceramics and children's book illustration. Many of her works are in existence. A memorial exhibit of her many works was held by the Plymouth Black and White Club, an art society, in 1970. She was always energetic at the Pond where she summered with her sisters and converted the barn into a sort of studio for art classes. She was somewhat upset by seeing the family homestead in other hands after 200 years, but did come out for a visit in her early eighties.

Mary Burgess became a registered nurse as a 1910 graduate of Boston's Children's Hospital and served with distinction in Boston



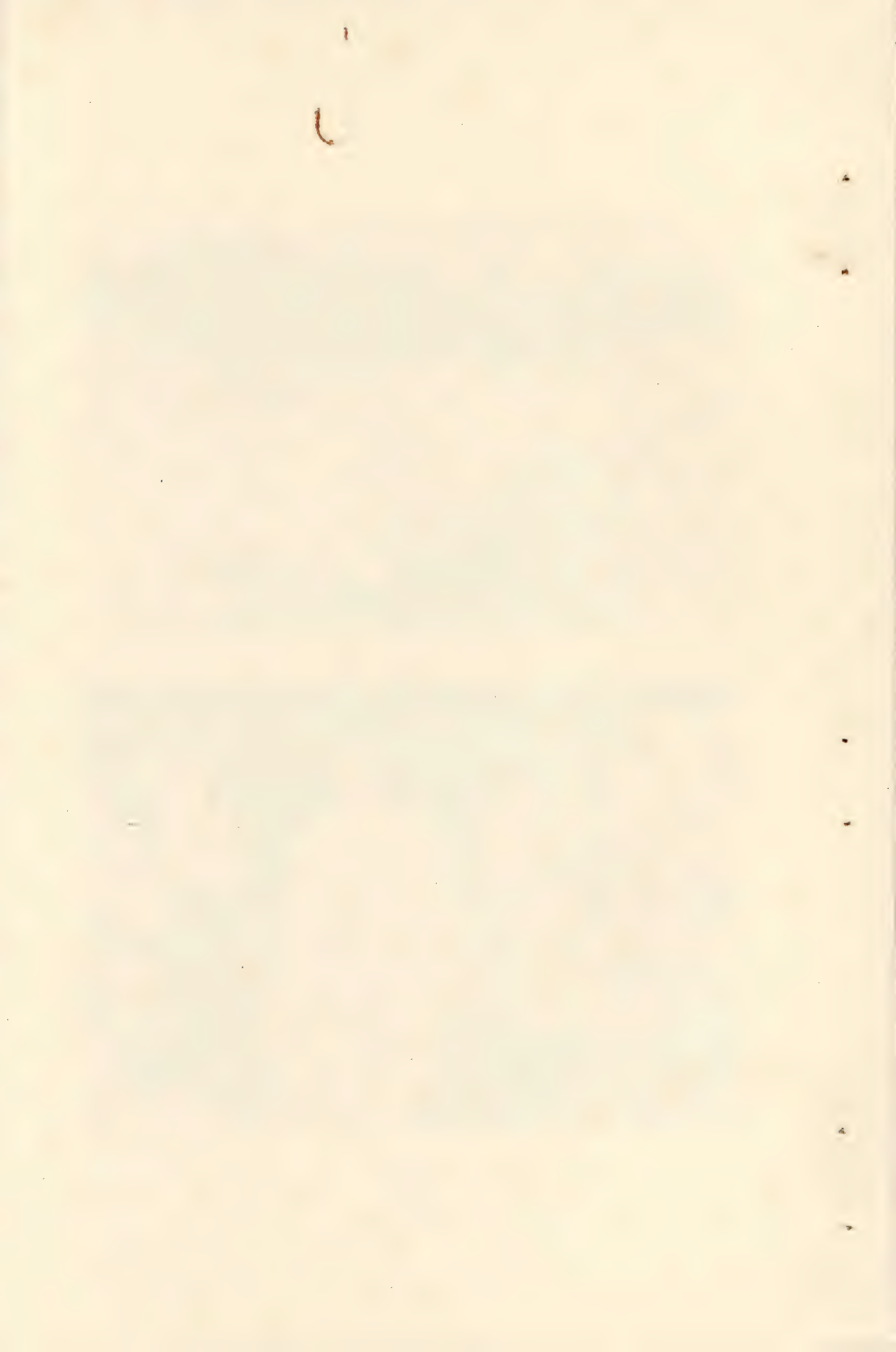
hospitals and St. Luke's in New York City. In 1913 she lived for a year in England on an estate on the Thames near Hartley as a special nurse for a Boston family. She was an army nurse in France during the first world war for a year and a half and underwent hospital bombardment at times. For many years she and her sister Susan travelled to California by car to spend winters in the Santa Barbara and other regions. Since retiring and living in Plymouth she has been until recently active as a hostess at the Spooner House.

She is a warm, kind and friendly person. She has been most helpful to me in providing information about what she remembers of the family and the Pond from her long lifetime and delights to visit her family homestead.

One of Peleg's sons, Leonard, lived in Plymouth and was a builder. He had a son, Eldon, who has two sons, Eldon and Richard, living in California. Leonard also has a daughter, Frances Burgess O'Keeffe, who resides in Santa Barbara, California.

The children of Richard Burgess, who with his family takes a summer cottage at South Pond, are in the tenth generation of Burgesses since the first Thomas came in 1630.





CHAPTER XIV. LORD'S POINT

My good friend, John Lord, octogenarian and retired Foreign Service officer, spent his boyhood summers on South Pond at the place of his father, Arthur Lord, at the north end of the Pond. His father had obtained the land in 1879, Book 1464, Page 247, which had been part of the Isaac Barnes property, and was held until his death in 1925.

John Lord remembers his father pulling him, in a dory, through the connecting brook leading into Boot Pond. This brook, sometimes dry, varies in height with that of the water level of the ponds.

Lord's Point had been known earlier as Kamesit, which was the Indian name. After his father purchased the point, he joined with a group of men to form the Kamesit Club.

The members of the club were William Hedge, Dr. Morris Richardson, William M. Bullivant, Arthur Lincoln of Hingham, Winslow Warren of Dedham, William V. Kellen, and Arthur Lord. Arthur Lord bought the property from the two surviving members, Lincoln and Warren, on Dec. 30, 1899, the last day of the century and recorded in Book 1498, Page 499.

John Lord has told me that he remembers that over the living room fireplace was a large unfinished painting by Winslow Homer of an ocean beach with a bonfire. Apparently it was sold with the house, which has been taken down and the land belongs to the Plymouth water supply system. John Lord spent pleasant summers there with his brothers and sister and family until he was fourteen.

It is said that Grover Cleveland, during his presidency and while summering at Buzzard's Bay, would come to South Pond with friends and enjoy the fishing.

John Lord has told me that just west of the present aqueduct from Great South Pond to Little South Pond there was before 1900 property belonging to the John Darling Churchill family. It contained a two story residence and a bowling alley of wooden construction nearer the Pond. At one time, inspired by the Civil War, it was called the *Union House* and was used as a tavern. By 1900 it had fallen apart in disuse.

Arthur Lord was an able and distinguished man. He was a resident of North Street in Plymouth, and commuted to Boston. In this family house John Lord was born. His father was a lawyer, historian, and public speaker. On his mother's side he is descended from Rev. James Kendall, 1769-1859, pastor of the Plymouth Church for 59 years until his death, and during his ministry the new meeting house was built in 1831. He was a distinguished incumbent and much loved by all who knew him.

John Lord's great great uncle was Nathan Lord, president of Dartmouth College in the years before the Civil War.

Arthur Lord was a bookman and collector. He was president of the Massachusetts Bar Association and the Massachusetts Historical Society. He gave in 1925 his library to Pilgrim Hall, described in a publication of the Pilgrim Society, Plymouth, 1971, entitled *The Arthur Lord Collection*, prepared by L. D. Geller, Director of the Pilgrim Society.

As Mr. Geller points out, he is "generally considered to be the most knowledgeable scholar in the area of Old Colony studies,

both in academic circles and without." Arthur Lord is characterized as a gentleman historian who valued the physical artifact and also the literary qualities of color and interest in historical writing above technical professionalism.

One of the dramatic achievements in his collecting was a copy of William Lambard's *Eirenarcha or of the Office of the Justices of Peace in Foure Books*, London, 1592, one volume, and his identifying the volume as a copy from the library of William Cecil, Lord Burghley.¹ It originally belonged to Sir William Cecil who was created Baron Burghley by Queen Elizabeth in 1571 and made a Privy Councilor. Cecil had previously been Secretary of State under Edward VI. The book bears the Burghley coat of arms on the cover, surrounded by the Order of the Garter.

It was given to and brought over on the *Mayflower* by William Brewster. It was the only written guide for a system of law and justice in the colony from its beginning and had a tremendous influence setting precedents for the administration of justice henceforth in the Colony.²

The *Eirenarcha* had been handed down by each Justice of the Peace to his successor. As Arthur Lord was the last Justice of the Peace in Plymouth, the book was in the collection he left to Pilgrim Hall.

There is now in Pilgrim Hall a stone pestle and axehead given to Arthur Lord by the Wampanoag Indians before 1900, in appreciation for legal advice he gave them.

John Lord has told me that he remembers being with his father when, having been the last Justice of the Peace in Plymouth, he thought he should dispose of the sealing implement

of that office and did so by hurling it into the deep water of South Pond. This action made a dramatic moment ending a long historical legal era, back to the days of Elizabethan Lord Burghley.

CHAPTER XV. THE DWELLING HOUSE

The area around the house and barn had been cleared for farming and other uses, totaling perhaps twelve acres. The contour of this land is relatively flat, a somewhat rare occurrence here, and possibly a major reason for its selection for a farm and dwelling. Initially such clearing was backbreaking work requiring many years, using the stump burning methods and removal by oxen if available, or planting around the stumps which would eventually rot. Most of this land today except for four or five acres around the house has reverted to forest and high white pine trees. I have some photographs taken perhaps a hundred years ago which show open fields with crops at that time. From about 1870 on it is evident that farming came to a gradual halt.

In this woodland before settlement there had been a small piece of meadow by the Pond as described in the Churchill deed. Some patches of this meadow grass are still growing. This was a treeless area with rich soil and some moisture. The Pond could supply water for cattle and crops, a supply of which was necessary for any husbandman to succeed. Perhaps it can be said that the ponds supplied a source of food from the abundant fish available which could be caught in great quantity. There was also an ice house near the shore of the Pond in the old photographs. If the settlers took time for bathing and swimming it would be delightful.

There is now an oil painting on canvas in the house showing the house and surroundings from a distance in the east front. This was painted by Alonzo Warren in 1884. Its many colors with full sky and a glimpse of South Pond give it a landscape effect.

In an article that appeared in the *Boston Sunday Globe* Magazine of November 19, 1972, Jeff Wylie wrote about archeological diggings in old Plymouth. He indicates that Dr. James Deetz, Assistant Director of Plimoth Plantation and professor of anthropology at Brown University has a hypothesis that three periods of culture emerged. In the first period, 1620-1660, yeomen were predominant, conservative in customs and deeply rooted in the medieval tradition. From 1660-1760 an Anglo-American culture began to emerge. "It was a typical folk culture, so resistant to change that in the rural areas of New England it persisted until past the middle of the 18th century." The third period from 1760 through 1835 was one in which the impact of the Renaissance, in the form of the Georgian tradition finally reached the deep countryside of New England. The reign of George I began in 1714 and the elite of that period built houses of the type known as Georgian, but it was not until the latter half of the century that the medieval tradition in the rural areas began to give way to the new style.

In a conversation I had with Susan Burgess during her visit here in 1962 she pointed out that the dwelling house was not the conventional farm type house but rather traced its design to Georgian influences in England of a slightly earlier period. I believe her evaluation to have been a correct one. The main part of the house is two full stories with attic above and has a plain Georgian classic simplicity. By 1769, the date of the building of the house, such a design was culturally possible.

Those who are familiar with Eleazer Wheelock and the founding of Dartmouth College in Hanover, N. H. are aware that the year 1769 also marks that date. The present weather vane on the barn depicts Eleazer Wheelock, the Indian Ocean, the old pine, the barrel of rum in the starting of the college.



I would like to describe the house. It was built on a slight rise of ground on three sides, providing excellent drainage under the foundation, well preserved to the present. There were supporting beams used over large field stones spaced randomly. The main house, rectangular in shape, running about 75 feet north to south faced east. It contains a large attic, used in the 1850's or earlier for weaving and sewing activities. Sheep on the farm provided wool for clothing, a universal custom in the eighteenth century. Woolen clothes were valuable enough to be mentioned in filed inventories of estates. Indian women from the vicinity would provide help for these activities.

On the front on each floor there are two windows left of the front door and one to the right. Continuing on the front northward is a kitchen with center door and window on either side. As mentioned earlier, the kitchen seems to have been a small cottage in its own right, added to the house at some early date. It has a slight slope from front to back, in the wooden ceiling and in the floor. Much of the original beams are exposed. At the west end rear of the main house was an extended one story with gable which had a small kitchen area, perhaps the original one, with rear entrance to the north with its outside stepping stone. There is a large cellar below and bulkhead entrance to it from the west or pond side. The front of the house had a large parlor-like room with door to the south to the side road. This room now runs along the full south side of the house for forty-two feet. Miss Mary Burgess told me that when she was very young, a girl came in this door riding a small horse or pony. In the 1920's a fireplace and hearth was added along the north wall of the room. The room has five windows and two glass French doors and is a most pleasant and sunny room. About a hundred years ago it was heated with a large round stove.

There is a small hall inside the front door and a stairway with curved ceiling up to five bedrooms, one of which contains a



fireplace and small wrought iron Franklin stove that can be used on occasion. There is a stairway up from the kitchen to the ample kitchen loft and leading into the other rooms. Underneath the front stairs is a clothes closet, the only one in the house, which is I believe typical of the construction of the time.

About 1870 the one-story gabled area on the west side of the house was altered to make a large bedroom on the second floor over the area and the roof was extended upward to make two full stories with attic above. The room faces the pond. Also a small room was made for a cistern to store a water supply before the days of automatic pumps. Downstairs, in addition to the living room is a sitting room, once used as a dining room with an original fireplace, a small burning room on the front, now used as a den, and the kitchen. The kitchen has five windows and two glass Christian type doors, providing lots of morning and afternoon sunlight with open views. The kitchen was thoroughly done over in 1961 without changing its essential appearance, pine paneled and with a brick wall for oven and small hearth and new pine cabinets. A new subfloor was laid and the original wide pine boards restored to their pristine natural color and relaid.

The floor and subfloors throughout the house were made of thick wide white pine boards of the 1760 era. For generations they were covered with many layers of dark green paint. The paint did help to preserve their surface. It has been a project of mine over several years to remove the paint and restore them to their natural warm golden color.

At some time earlier in the life of the house, probably before the 1850's, a small ell was brought down from their neighbor's house to the north, as recounted earlier. This had a dirt floor and was used partly for a woodshed and storage area. It has now been made into a bathroom, utility room and area with closets, with outside door north to the barn.

A little more than two hundred years later the house, with its alterations is now basically the same as it was in its first decades, a tribute to the good workmanship of its builders and their materials.

Its beautiful setting on a rise of ground has been enhanced by the planting over many years of a variety of trees by the Burgess family. In fact the house has outlasted many of the first trees, such as a huge apple tree outside the kitchen door, once as high as the house. There is a tall catalpa between the house, planted by Mary Burgess, which is covered in July with white blossoms. There is a tamarack or larch tree, very tall now, a tree which the settlers called a candle tree, for when its leaves become yellow after a frost the setting sun shining through it gives it the appearance of a lighted candle. This tree is unusual in that it is a deciduous conifer. In the spring it has tiny ruby blossoms that grow into small brown cones. It drops its needles after frost.

An old wooden fence encloses an open lawn area across the front of the house, constructed originally, I suppose, to keep the chickens and farm animals in their proper area. Some sections have been restored, but the original fence has great age. It is seen in the 1884 painting of the house and probably goes back to the 1850's. It has trumpet vines covering it in summer which attract humming birds. Many years ago it used to be annually painted with whitewash. There were also several wooden hitching posts in front of it to tie up the horses, as can be seen in the photograph.

Some bayberry shrubs spread naturally near the front side of the house. There are a few very old apple trees flourishing on the pond side of the house and fill the May air with blossoms. There is also a mulberry tree of good age which produces a bumper crop of berries all during the month of July, for birds and humans alike.

There are several hemlock and fir trees at the rear of the house which are now quite high, providing welcome shade in the summer and greenery in the winter. An ancient wisteria vine is alive and well and blossoms each year. It is an indication of its vigor that a shoot has come up from underneath the kitchen floor through a tiny seam by a supporting post and has a length of 18 inches and many leaves.

Birds are all around the house and property. Most of the year one can see partridges close to the house feeding on seeds and berries. Bluejays are always around, as are chickadees and buntings. Yellow grosbeaks come in clusters in early spring. Each year as soon as the buds come out on the oaks a pair or two of Baltimore orioles arrive and sing constantly until their departure about the fourth of July. Towhees are here during the summer and the lower field has hosts of robins. Varieties of humming birds can be seen, also infrequently a scarlet tanager. The old maple tree is host to many woodpeckers, including the downy variety. There are many flickers with their red heads digging worms from the grass. Wren families and yellow finches live close to the house. Friendly catbirds are here during the season. Occasionally a bobwhite can be heard or seen in the yard. Mourning doves and whippoorwills are common and the hoot or screech of owls can be heard on many nights.

Along our northeastern boundary which starts at the shore of South Pond and runs easterly a distance of 1200 feet to Boot Pond Road, there is an area of continuous high ground sloping southward at various degrees for 300 feet or more, making a sort of wooded hillside. It has an abundance of tall white pines which makes a sylvan grove. The ground has become cushion-like by pine needles fallen since early times. It is a pleasant place for quiet and revery.



I would like to mention the continuous cluster of wild beach plums along the southern side of the house near the road. Their botanical name is *prunus maritima*, plums near the sea. They are an indication of the age and tranquility of the house location. Whether some were first brought here and transplanted, or more likely, by chance arrived by natural methods is not known. We are almost five miles from the sandy seashore which is their natural habitat. An occasional surviving clump can still be seen in a few spots on the incoming roads. The soil around the house seems to be hospitable for their thriving, since there is a small residue of white sand in it, a remnant of the scouring of the bed rock by the ice sheets. The bush has deep tap roots going down several feet. There are also side roots for shoots. The beach plums seem to be almost indestructable, for some were chopped down to the base of the trunks of 3 inches in diameter, perhaps fifty or more years ago, yet have come back to heights of 7 or 8 feet.

They have thrived and spread out over the years and run continuously for a distance of 100 feet. Toward the end of April or early May they are in bloom along each spikey branch for a period of two weeks. They always bloom even if they later do not produce fruit. They are a delightful sight.

Their fruit yield has a wide variation from year to year. Some years there are no plums. Occasionally they are bountiful and might produce up to a bushel or more. They are considered to be self sterile and require cross pollination, so having blossoms from other growing things nearby is helpful, so that the bees can act. Late spring frosts or too much rain at the wrong time can have effects. The color of the beach plum varies from a deep purple, light red, light green, and a few with yellow skins. Some of this variation is due to plums maturing at different intervals on the same bush. Their size is not uniform, either, but most of them are hazel nut and some are like cranberries in size.

They were noted along the shores of New York and Narragansett Bays by John de Verrazano, the Florentine voyager, in 1524, who called them "damson trees." They are a fine gift from nature to this homestead.

In 1959 after being in the Burgess family for a period of 158 years, the homestead and lands at Boot Pond were sold by Susan and Mary Burgess to Warren Reed, Judge Paul Reardon, and Dr. Milton Brougham, friends of mine and summer residents and neighbors of the Burgess sisters who had spent their summers at the Pond continuously since 1918.

From them the writer bought the homestead and barn with sixteen acres of surrounding fields and woodlands and part of the shoreline in 1959. The house contained the furniture and household possessions, some going back to early days and with restoration are still used. The barn, built in the 1850's and converted by the sisters into a studio and recreational area can also be used as a large indoor porch in addition to its other uses. It still has many implements used in the house and farm from its earliest days. A lean-to, attached to the south side of the barn when it was built, served as a buggy stall and now as a wood shed.

One of the great pleasures that came from my purchase of the Burgess Place was a warm friendship that developed with Charles H. Packard. He lived close by on the Pond since the 1920's. He was a veteran Plymouth police officer with a host of friends and was retired when I came to know him. He had the flavor of an earlier America about him, and was of an open, warm, friendly disposition. He cultivated a large vegetable garden in the open field between the house and the Pond. He was helpful to the Burgess sisters in many ways.

He really loved this area by the Pond and it was easy for me to catch his affection. He helped me in innumerable ways to restore the house where repairs were needed. He was skilled in carpentry, painting, roofing, and could fix most anything that needed fixing.

He was nearing his seventies when I first got to know him. He would visit the house each morning and evening for friendly greetings and conversation. He showed enthusiasm and devotion in his many projects about this place because he was very fond of it. The pleasant memory of Charlie Packard is a part of this homestead.

One of the seasons at the Pond I particularly enjoy is the autumn months of September and October. Frosts usually do not occur until about the first of November, but as the days get shorter the foliage changes and colors are produced. Since there is such a variety of trees and shrubs the range of colors is vast. For a period of eight weeks every few days there are new and different delights for the eye. With most days of clear blue skies and sunshine and pleasant temperatures autumn can bring ecstatic experience here.

CHAPTER XVI. TO THE PRESENT

Returning to the concept we used in the beginning, the ambience of this two hundred year old homestead near the Pond, its lawns, trees, shrubs, flowers and forest is an example of the past becoming part of the present. The continuum into the present is enriched by what was accomplished long years ago on this spot. Shakespeare said the past is prologue. The past does speak to us here. Because of the maturing, we have the present pleasure. What went before us, slowly brought about by all those living here since the beginning, using human hands, endurance, spirit, taste, produced in our time a beautiful habitation for fully human dwelling. Time, nature and people worked together to produce a kind of ideal habitation such as Josiah Cotton, inspired by the poet, Pomfret, looked forward to in his time, so long ago.

Kamesit, the region around these ponds, is no longer as the Indians once knew it, but the charm of the region endures, in part from the ever renewing cycle of nature, the beauty that has been allowed to flourish by itself during the seasons, especially the beauty of spring flowers and the flaming colors of autumn, as well as even the clean snows after a winter blizzard. The loving care of the humans here from beyond two centuries gives delight to the present dwellers and their friends who visit. I would like to pay what homage I can raise to this care.

It is my hope that this excursion into the past, even though much of what went on cannot be recaptured, something of what we found will produce and illuminate experience now and give a place and identity in the present to what survives from long years ago.



the mile

the nylon swimming trunks expand with green
as they follow the arms into the smooth wind
down into the crayfish hour where leeches beat
and grin; holding then a long while of wind
I flash beneath the rippled skims and rattling boughs.
down and straight out; becoming aqua-like again
as the currents of cold catch hold of the sheaves
of scalp and blow them in silence
only to surface and explode, imbibe and
refer the crest to gulls; down into a rhythm
of quest. here shattering whole schools of
fish and words I pry the pond apart and it
regains me and squirts me out into the sailboat air.
I touch the blossoming float of bobbing
barrels and plane tree sides linked in beams
of rocking wind and fresh pine trees crippling the breeze.
up now the way I sit resting from the first
one thousand strokes watching cool brooking pond
glaze broiling on the planks then
dipped into the longest hike of all I suddenly
coast into the deeps leaving only behind
“we are not come into mourning.”

—Tom Daley
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

(A recollection from his experience
of swimming the length of Boot Pond and back)



APPENDIX

List of Sources Consulted

Plymouth County Registry of Deeds

Plymouth County Registry of Probate

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Darrett B. Rutman, Beacon Press, Second ed., 1968

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1970

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Carl Otwin Sauer, University of California Press, 1971

A Geologist's View of Cape Cod

Arthur H. Strahler

Natural History Press, New York, 1966

Opening Quotation from

Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind, by Shunryu Suzuki, page 29

Weatherhill, New York and Tokyo, Third Printing, 1971

AFTER KAMESIT NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. Page 1—I have used as a reference for wildflowers *A Field Guide to Wildflowers* by Roger Tory Peterson, Houghton, Mifflin, Boston, 1968.
2. Page 1—*Indian Place Names of New England*, compiled by John C. Haden, New York, Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, 1962, p. 73, refers to Kamesset Point, Dukes County, Massachusetts, Wampanoag, "at the place of great fish," also given as "pine place."

Two octogenarians in Plymouth were familiar with the word. One from Duxbury thought it meant "west wind." There was a club on Lord's Point on South Pond known as the Kamesit Club during the 1890's.

John Eliot, the apostle to the Indians, does not have the name in his dictionary.

CHAPTER I. THE FACE OF THE LAND AND GROWING THINGS

1. Page 5—*Plymouth Memories of an Octogenarian*, p. 514.
2. Page 5—*Ibid.*, "Wood, in *New England's Prospect* under date of 1639 says, 'the horn bound tree is a tough kind of tree that requires so much pains in riving as is almost incredible, being the best to make bowls and dishes, not being subject to crack or leak.'"

CHAPTER IV. THE CHURCHILL FAMILY

1. Page 25—Here is a condensed genealogy of the Churchill family

John Churchill, d.1663
Three Sons

- I. Joseph, b.c.1650
 - A. Elkanah, b. ?
 - B. Elkanah, b.1726
 1. Elkanah, b.1754
- II. Eleazer, b.1652
 - A. Eleazer (2nd), 1680-1754
 1. Eleazer (3rd), b.1714, m.1738
 2. Josiah, b.1716
 3. Jonathan, b.1720
 - a. Eleazer (4th), b.1744, m.1776
- III. John, b.c.1657
 - A. John, b.1691
 1. John, b.1727

In 1768, Jonathan Churchill, b.1720, son of the third Eleazer Churchill (1680-1754), and his wife Hannah, sold the ninety acres of woodlot including a small piece of meadow at South Pond to Henry Richmond for twenty pounds, as recorded in Book 54, Page 19, in the Plymouth Registry of Deeds (see the photograph of the deed).

CHAPTER V. COTTON FAMILY LAND

1. Page 28—In an unrelated matter, but of interest, the town records indicate that Josiah Cotton had a black slave in 1732 named Quamony. Theophilus Cotton had a slave in 1751 named Phillis. *Plymouth Memories of an Octogenarian*, p. 20, Davis estimates that in 1740 there were at least fifty slaves, all ages.
2. Page 28—*Plymouth Memories of an Octogenarian*, p. 29.

CHAPTER VI. HENRY RICHMOND AND HIS SON, ELIAB

1. Page 31—Regarding Henry Richmond and his son Eliab's purchase, the deed shows how the boundaries were to be determined. His son was to have some 580 feet on the shore of the pond, starting on the southwest corner of the property and then northerly and northeasterly to such a point of the compass as to include the exact quantity of thirty acres, thence easterly to the boundary with Jonathan Holmes and by his land to the first corner.

Eliab and Hannah Richmond held these thirty acres from January 1773 for eleven years until April 1784, and probably lived on and farmed these acres. These years coincide closely with those of the American Revolution. When he sold them to Nathaniel Clark, Book 63, Page 69, for 11 pounds 8 shillings, he took a loss of some two pounds during the eleven years. Nathaniel Clark had bought Henry Richmond's property a year earlier.

2. Page 32—Henry Richmond had some interesting property transactions during the fifteen years 1768-1783 he owned the property, I discovered in my perusal of many deeds. Book 74, Page 54, January 14, 1773, records three transactions all on the same day. Perhaps economy was the motive.

In the southeast corner of the land he bought from Jonathan Churchill he had a boundary with Jonathan Holmes. The latter, a year earlier in 1767, had bought land from Josiah Churchill, brother of Jonathan Churchill. Curiously, somehow, Jonathan Holmes had built his house on the Richmond land. So Richmond sold him two and one half acres where the Holmes dwelling was located, "all with a Fence going sixteen rods (264 feet) wide." The consideration was an exchange of two and one half acres from Jonathan Holmes from another part of his land described in the deed as "a piece of land at South Pond, so called, being the southwest corner of my land and a strip that lyes by the Pond and to extend so far from the Pond as to make the said Richmond Range a straight line down to the Pond and containing about two acres and a half." Apparently this was an amicable swap-settlement.

On September 14, 1773, the same year, Book 57, Page 180, Henry Richmond sold to Josiah Bradford, mariner, one and one half acres for "Eighteen shillings lawful money." Josiah Bradford was from Middleboro.

According to Davis's Genealogy, Josiah Bradford married Hannah Rider in 1746 and had Josiah born 1754. In 1781 Josiah, Jr., married Elizabeth Holmes. I have not been able to find in the Registry of Deeds a record of the final disposition of Bradford's one and a half acre. The deed describes the land as "the piece of land where said Bradford's House stands and is all included with Fence and is twenty Rods long and sixteen Rods wide at one end and eight Rods at the other end. Being in the easterly Part of my said Homestead lands."

Another case of a man building his house on another man's land?

3. Page 32—I have found some material about Jonathan Holmes, Henry Richmond's neighbor to the south. He was the son of Joseph Holmes and Phoebe, daughter of John Churchill, who were married in 1726. As of 1769 he was listed as a fisherman and had lived near Scook's Pond near Manomet Point. In 1765 he sold some of his land there which was laid out to his father, Book 52, Page 165.

According to Book 54, Page 241, on April 17, 1769, he bought from Mary and William Bartlett, a seafaring man, "for nine pounds, six shillings, 8. d, a lot of woodland containing 40 acres at a place called South Pond and is in number fourth in the Fifth Great Lot, being the Lot which I bought of Josiah Churchill (brother of Jonathan) by deed June 30, 1767. This would be the area running east from the southeast side of Boot Pond.

Nineteen years later, in 1788, as shown in Book 71, Page 265, he sold to "Mathew Porter of Plympton for 30 pounds whole of my land and buildings at South Pond . . . saving the small part I sold Henry Richmond." Mathew Porter sold the land the next year to Samuel Rickard of Plymouth, yeoman, along with 32 acres in the fifth share in the 6th great lot he had bought from William Thomas and Benjamin Bramhall. Porter goes on to say that the cut wood and grain in the ground "to be free for me until January next, also liberty for one Levi Hoit to remove his said house from said land if he moves it between this and the first day of January next," Sept. 7, 1789. Hoyt's Pond is on present day maps.

On September 26, 1791, Samuel and Priscilla Rickard sold for thirty pounds to Luke Hall, laborer, land purchased of Mathew Porter in 1789, containing about 69 acres, plus the other 24 acres. On June 8, 1792, Book 78, Page 94, the land is sold to William Hall Jackson, "trader," 24 acres

and 69 acres "in the easterly side of the southerly arm of South Pond, Gunner's Exchange and Finney's Meadow" for 24 pounds, two shillings to be paid by June 1, 1794.

CHAPTER VIII. SAMUEL WRIGHT AND THE WRIGHT FAMILY

1. In the years 1723 to the 1790's there are recorded for the Plymouth area some twenty-seven grants of land to the name Samuel Wright, in three generations. The land includes uplands, swamps, woodland and meadow, much of it in Plympton.

In 1784, 45-274 Samuel Wright bought from William Raymond, both of New Stamford, Vermont, forty-three acres at Bloody Pond in Plympton.

In 1794, Samuel Wright bought property in the Boot Pond area. 88-222 shows that for thirteen shillings he purchased one-sixth part of one-half of the second share of the fifth great lot from the estate of Benjamin Wright, laid out to Benoni Lucas, whose daughter married John Wright, 1688-1744. The second share includes land on either side of the upper half of Boot Pond. In 1796, 84-184, Samuel Wright bought five-tenths part of one-half of the second share of the fifth great lot for twenty-five dollars. This land adjoined the land he bought the year before from Benjamin Wright's estate. This land was bought from several children of John Wright, his heirs. The amount would be about eighteen acres.

Samuel Wright, in 1800, as shown in 88-241, during the time of his ownership of the homestead, sold to Nathaniel Carver, who served in the Revolution, for thirty-five dollars, land on the westerly side of Boot Pond which is land in the second share of the fifth great lot which he had bought some years before.

Another member of the Wright family who lived in the vicinity was Joshua Wright, born 1758, son of Joseph Wright, born 1721, who in turn is the son of Isaac Wright, son of Adam Wright, 1645-1724.

2. Page 37

The Will of the first Samuel Wright, 1699-1773

He married Anna Tilson, 1720-1793

Dated Oct. 14, 1772. Registry of Probate File #23542

The second Samuel Wright, Executor

"I, Samuel Wright of Plimpton in the county of Plymouth in New England, yeoman, being weak of body but of perfect mind and memory thanks be given unto God therefor, calling unto mind the mortality of my body, and knowing that it is appointed for all men once to dye, do make and ordain this my last will and testament, that is to say, principally and first of all I give and recommend my soul into the hands of God that gave it, and my body I recommend to the earth to be buried in decent Christian burial at the discretion of my executor hereafter named, nothing doubting but at the general resurrection I shall receive the same again by the almighty power of God, and as touching such worldly estate wherewith it pleased God to bless me in this life, I give, demise and dispose of the same in the following manner of form . . . "

He gives to his wife Anna one-half of their dwelling house and one-half of the piece of land lying around the house and "half of my indoors moveable estate." He gives to his son Samuel "in consideration of the labor that he did for me after he was twenty-one years of age, the dwelling house he now lives in" and also lands around his homestead. He gives homestead land to his sons Jacob and Edmond, his daughter Sarah Hall and also included his grandson, Nathan Wright. To his grandson Edmond Wright four pounds yearly until he arrives at sixteen years of age. He gives to his sons Samuel and Jacob in equal division all his wearing apparel. He orders his two sons Samuel and Jacob "to provide as much firewood cut and brought to the door for my wife yearly and every year during her natural life or so long as she remains my natural widow as is needful for her fire." Lastly, "I do constitute, make and ordain my trusty and well-beloved son Samuel Wright my sole executor."

The inventory of the estate on March 10, 1773, as attested by Gideon Bradford, Zebedee Chandler and Joseph Wright totals 726 pounds, 5 shillings, 11 d. This is an estate of a fairly wealthy man.

Homestead farm and buildings	480-4-0
Cedar swamp outlands and iron oar	119-8-4
Wearing apparel of the deceased	8-15-8
The personal estate given	
Sarah Hall (once lent)	8-16-9
Remaining part of the indoors	
moveables	41-7-8
The provisions in the house	4-14-7
	£726-5-11

The opening paragraph gives eloquence to the faith of the believer of that day. The hand script in which this will is written is the most perfect and beautiful I have encountered in my investigations.

The Will and Estate of the Second Samuel Wright, 1728-1814
1816, #23543

He is the father of the third Samuel Wright, born about 1760, one-time owner of the homestead at Boot Pond, 1786-1801. The will provides for five of his children, including his son the third Samuel. At his death the second Samuel was 86 years of age. The administrator of the will was his son Peleg, 1771-1856. The appraisers were Elijah Bisbee, Isaac Wright (he is the third Isaac, born 1776) and Levi Bradford, Jr.

I mention the will of the second Samuel, although he was not at South Pond, since it does show factors of the social context in which the third Samuel lived.

The property was in nearby Plympton. The real estate was divided by the appraisers into five shares, each described in detail, for the children, sons Samuel and Peleg, daughters Sarah, Abigail and Mercy.

The inventory was as follows:

One-half of dwelling house	\$100.00
One-eighth part of pew in	
lower floor of meeting house	5.00
About two acres and a quarter	
in orchard by house	225.00

One acre west side of road	125.00	
18 acres north end of farm	300.00	
6 acres of woodland in Carver, by Israel Dunham	50.00	
5 acres and a half adjoining Noah Dunham	88.00	
Cedar swamp lot	12.50	
		943.50
Wearing apparel	11.65	
Beds, bedding, and linen	69.51	
Pewter, iron, brass, earthen and glassware	19.84	
Livestock and farming tools	116.22	
		\$1160.72

According to the administrator's account after payment of debts owed and expenses, each of the five heirs received about \$25.00.

In comparison with the John Burgess inventory thirty-four years later, Samuel Wright, the second Samuel, is obviously a much wealthier man and owner of more land. Yet his debts were relatively much higher. Maybe we can say he lived well on credit.

John Burgess had more value in his wearing apparel, but the second Samuel far exceeded him in his household effects and in the livestock and farming tools especially.

CHAPTER IX. THE FIRST BURGESSES

Page 41—My sources are the genealogical section of Wm. T. Davis's *Ancient Landmarks of Plymouth*, 1881.

Also *The Burgess Book*, T. R. Marvin & Son, Boston, 1865, compiled by the Rev. Frederick Freeman of Dedham.

Also the *Plymouth Towne Book* and the Sept. 8, 1961, edition of the *Chronical Herald of Halifax, N. S.*

Conversations with Miss Mary Burgess provided me with much data.

2. Page 43—I should add that his son, Thomas (the fifth Thomas) married in 1781 Lydia Tribble. They had twin daughters, Poly and Lydia, born 1784. Lydia married George Delano of the later Delano-Roosevelt family.

CHAPTER X. JOHN BURGESS

1. Page ⁴⁵~~34~~—Here is some information I have been able to gather about the land transactions of John Burgess.

His uncle, also John Burgess, has recorded many land transactions in Rochester from 1765-1795. His nephew John Burgess, also of Rochester, at age 30 made his first purchase in the South Pond area on Feb. 5, 1795, Book 77, Page 145, of a lot of 40 acres from Joshua Wright to the south of Gunner's Exchange Pond. Rochester is located on the southern boundary of Plymouth at the foot of the original second and third great lots. In this region is the Wankinquo River which begins near the western end of Halfway Pond Road in Carver. In the center flows the Agawam River which comes from the Halfway Pond Brook flowing southwest from Halfway Pond. Much of the region is now in the Myles Standish State Forest.

Six years later, in 1801, he bought the Samuel Wright land and buildings on the east shore of the Pond, as recorded in Book 91, Page 78. He paid \$600.00 for the property. He made his livelihood here until his death in 1850, a period of 49 years. In his family were 13 children.

John Burgess's next major purchase was forty acres on March 7, 1807, 106-227, for \$80.00 from Rossiter Cotton, a justice of the peace and land agent and member of the Cotton family. It was "on the southerly side of the southerly arm of Grate South Pond." Some of this land was valuable land for cedar timber and is now cranberry bog land.

The next purchase was on June 18, 1821, 149-174, of one undivided half part of the third share of the fifth great lot laid out to Nathaniel Holmes and sold by his great grandchildren. The original deed of the transaction I have on the wall of the kitchen. It is signed by the heirs Ichabod Davie, Robert Davie, Samuel Talbot, Jerusha, his wife, Lydia Ryder, Josiah Carver, Josiah Carver, Jr., Elizabeth Carver, all of Plymouth. It was sold for \$47.50, paid by John Burgess, yeoman. It contained thirty-eight acres on the eastern and western shores of the southern part of the southerly

arm of the Pond. So at Boot Pond he accumulated during his lifetime some 250 acres. The area map on page vii shows the Burgess land holdings at their maximum amount.

John Burgess also had land holdings in other parts of Plymouth, such as salt hay marsh and land at Saquish Neck, where his father was located. He bought in 1819 three acres near the present park or Training Green and Town Office Building. He sold it in 1825 to Samuel Doten and became part of Doten's Wharf estate. This is part of the land allotted to Governor Bradford in 1623. The present Burgess home on Union Street is in this area. Barnes Lane was the old name for Lincoln Street.

The ancient way south from Leyden Street in the center of town had a crossing by ford at low water to a beach on the southern side. There was lowland extending from Water Street through what was called Dublin to the springs in the rear of the houses standing on Sandwich Street opposite the Training Green (Wm. Davis, *Ancient Landmarks*, p. 294). The Burgess property was close to the springs. Even now they still have to be drained. In 1836 John Burgess bought a lot at the corner of Sandwich and North Green Street which the family kept beyond the 1880's. In the same year he bought the adjoining lot on the west which he sold in 1848.

In 1831, yeoman John Burgess was sixty-six years old. This year he deeded his property at the Pond to his son, Phineas, 172-47. Phineas, 1807-1890, now aged 27, "in consideration of two hundred dollars . . . make over and secure to them (his parents) . . . the use and improvement of the whole of the homestead farm . . . during the terms of their natural lives or to the survivor of them."

In 1833, 177-97, John sold 70 woodland acres near the ponds to Samuel Leach and Daniel Gale. After his death in 1850, one of his sons and heirs, Nathaniel of Kingston, for \$30.75, sold, 241-212, a total of one hundred assorted acres to Samuel and Thomas B. Sherman. The land was in the Half Moon Pond area and the southerly part of Boot Pond, not near the homestead.

2. Page 46—According to a note I have seen in the handwriting of Ruth Burgess Manter, which she says is copied from the *Record of the Sprague Family*, she states:

"Jennie (Jennie, daughter of Isaac Burgess) has a Book with the History of the Sprague Family and Which I have been Reading.

"My Grandmother was the daughter of Mercy and Phineas Sprague. They had two daughters and one Son, named Seth and two daughters, Mercy and Ruth. Ruth was my Grandmother and she was a twin to Seth Sprague. They were Born on the 4th of July, and she used to go over to Duxbury and Celebrate the day with him. I find by the Records he was a very Business like man and is called Hon. Seth Sprague. he was a member of Massachusetts Legislator 27 yrs., sometimes in the House and sometimes in the Senate. he has several times been chosen one of the Counsellors of the Governor of the Commonwealth but always declined that honor."

CHAPTER XI. THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY, NEARBY AND BEYOND

1. Page 53

South Pond Cemetery

Some names on gravestones to be seen there, on the land donated by the Wright Family, going back to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

28 Indian Graves

William Burgess, 1767-1836	Jennie Burgess, 1879-1971 (daughter of Isaac)
Mary Burgess, 1763-1843	
John Burgess, 1765-1860	Seth Bennett, 1811-1900
Anna Tribble Burgess, 1765-1805	Sylvanus Sampson, 1748-1799
Ruth Sprague Burgess, 1766-1846	Sylvanus Sampson, 1749-1824
	Sylvanus Sampson, 1780-1874
Phineas Burgess, 1807-1890	Sylvanus Sampson, 1857-1929
Charlotte Burgess, 1812-1903	
Jabez Burgess, 1796-1819 (died at sea)	Belcher Manter, 1736-1825
	Belcher Manter, 1776-1857
Seth Burgess, 1830-1907	Sarah Wright Manter, 1781-1866
Sarah Burgess, 1831-1903	
	George Manter, 1798-1857

Vinal Burgess, 1796-1865
Esther Clark Burgess, 1801-1873

William Burgess 1762-1836
Lucy Burgess, 1763-1843

Charlotte T. Burgess, 1848-1876

Isaac Burgess, 1835-1924

Truman Sampson, 1802-1884

Levi Sampson, 1822-1891

Joseph Wright, 1721-1804
Capt. Joshua Wright, 1758-1833

Joseph Wright, 1787-1867
Lucy Wright, 1788-1872

- 1a. Page 55—An earlier effort in 1701 for assistance to alewives is found in the Town Records, Vol. 2, Page 79. The petitioners mentioned possibly did not live too far away and some may have had homesteads in the community.

“Grant to make a stream for herring from South Pond to Eel River.

Town meeting of May 20th, 1701.

“George Morton, Ephraim Morton, Nathaniel Morton, Josiah Finney, Benj. Warren, Ebenezer Holmes and Thomas Faunce requested that if they could make a stream from the Grate South Pond so called into the brook that runneth through Finney’s meadow into the Eale River in order to the leting up alewives into sd Pond that the town would grant the privilege of two or three pole breadth on each side of sd. stream of land down along sd. stream so far as the town comons goeth which sd. request was granted them and to stop the Pond when it needs.”

2. Page 57—*Plymouth Memories of an Octogenarian*, p. 60.
3. Page 58—*Ibid.*, p. 49.
4. Page 59—*Ibid.*, p. 86.
5. Page 59—*Ibid.*, p. 74.
6. Page 59—*Ibid.*, p. 65.
7. Page 60—*Ibid.*, p. 74.
8. Page 60—*Ibid.*, p. 438.

9. Page 61—*Ibid.*, p. 158.
10. Page 61—*Ibid.*, p. 188.
11. Page 61—*Ibid.*, p. 468.
12. Page 62—*Ibid.*, p. 427.
13. Page 62—*Ibid.*, p. 128.
14. Page 62—*Ibid.*, p. 130.
15. Page 63—*Ibid.*, P. 241.
16. Page 64—*Ibid.*, p. 332.
17. Page 64—*Ibid.*, p. 247.
18. Page 66—*Ibid.*, p. 430.

MEMORIES OF THE BOOT POND PLACE

1. This book, written by Susan H. Burgess, is in the form of a story for children as a memoir of her own girlhood days at her grandparents' farm. It was given to her niece, Frances Burgess O'Keeffe, and is so inscribed by the author. It may have been written in the 1920's and covers a time presumably in the 1880's. She was 12 years old by 1890. During the 1880's her grandparents would be in their seventies.

Totaling 33 pages, it has 11 water color illustrations, 5½" x 7" in size, each on a page of its own. It is hand printed in black ink in script writing. The author has made the plain cover and has hand sewn and bound the pages. They measure 12" x 9½".

The eight children mentioned were born over a period of 17 years, from 1868 to 1885, making a group of three boys and five girls. The 1880's would be a good time in the ages of the children to enjoy their grandparents' farm at Boot Pond.

Against the usual Plymouth custom of referring to bodies of fresh water as "ponds," Susan Burgess refers to them as "lakes."

An obvious contrast in the 100 years since then has been the growth of trees, not only in the open fields, but close to the house and barn. This fact was quite apparent to Miss Minnie Burgess and she emphasized it to me on a recent visit. She has known the Place for most of her 94 years. There are now three large white pines, many large fir trees, several deciduous trees, such as maples, beech, tamarack, catalpa and mulberry which have grown up in the intervening years since the water colors were made. Then there were more open fields, pasture and orchard as well as a fence near the pond for keeping the cattle in bounds.

The Water Colors

1. THE CROOKED ROAD

This was on the curve downhill before the house could be seen.

2. THE FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE HOUSE

This is about 300 feet from the front of the house, showing an open field on the left and Boot Pond beyond.

3. UNTITLED

Shows a horse and covered buggy tied to a hitching post by the fence in front of the house.

4. UNTITLED

Grandma Charlotte sitting by the dining room fireplace and a glimpse through the door into the sitting room beyond.

5. OH WHAT A PLACE TO PLAY

Two little girls playing with costumes in the north end of the well-stocked attic.

6. UNTITLED

A boy and two girls and a head of a pig behind the pig pen fence running north from the house and showing the steps up into the barn.

7. UNTITLED

The interior of the barn from the front door, with a cow and horse.

8. UNTITLED

Shows the lower part of the field, the big oak tree and the Pond.

9. UNTITLED

A little blond girl on the swing under the big oak at pond edge.

10. LEARNING TO ROW WITH THE ANCHOR OUT WAS SAFEST

The sandy shore of the curving beach with three children. One is in the boat in the water with the anchor in the dry sand.

11. UNTITLED

In the rain are two children in a row boat near the pond shore.

CHAPTER XIV. LORD'S POINT

1. Page 129—Miss Joan Wake, Hon. M. A. Oxon., F.S.A.F.R. Hist. S., the Hon. Secretary of the Northamptonshire Record Society, Lamport Hall, Northampton, England, writing in *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, Vol. II, No. 4, 1957, p. 184, tells of her visit to Plymouth and the *Eirenarcha*.

“From Milton I was taken to Plymouth and introduced to the Plymouth Rock, which—dare I say it?—was something of a disappointment. I had imagined the disembarkation on it of the whole of the crew and passengers of the *Mayflower I*, but doubt very much whether three—or even two—of the Pilgrim Fathers, hanging around each others necks, could have balanced on it with any degree of stability. How ever, there it is—surrounded with its railing, facing lovely Cape Cod Bay, and properly regarded with great veneration—one of the famous stones of history. Plymouth, by the way was eagerly awaiting the arrival of *Mayflower II*, which at that moment lay becalmed in the middle of the Atlantic.

“Plymouth is naturally very conscious of its history, and in the Hall of the Pilgrim Society is a most interesting collection of records, pictures, furniture, clothes, books, etc. The most thrilling object to me was a second edition (1592) of William Lambard's *Eirenarcha*, an early treatise on the office of Justices of the Peace. Bound in brown calf, the book is embossed with the arms of William Cecil, first Lord Burghley, to whom originally it first belonged. As the catalogue states, Burghley was the colleague of William Davison, Secretary to Queen Elizabeth I, and Davison, in turn, was the early patron of William Brewster, one of the founders of Plymouth, Mass. It was therefore, quite possibly William Brewster who brought this book over in the *Mayflower*, where it has been

known to have been for long in the possession of the "Trial Justices" (Justices of the Peace) for Plymouth. Be that as it may, we have here a concrete example of the way in which this famous institution, which has worked so successfully in the mother country since the 14th century, was carried with the flag not only into this "remote, heathen and barbarous land" (as America is described in Queen Elizabeth's Letters Patent to Sir Humphrey Gilbert), but into all the three other continents, where, in a modified form it has in many places survived, even since the flag has been withdrawn.

"About ten miles south of Plymouth, buried deep in vast woods, is the summer residence of Mr. and Mrs. John Lord, whom I had met in Northampshire, Mrs. Lord being sister to Squire Brudenell of Deene. I spent a night with them in their tiny little house in a beautiful glade of the forest, looking across a grassy slope to a large artificial lake which is used to flood the cranberry bogs in frosty weather. We passed some of these bogs as we came through the woods, for cranberry growing and preserving is carried on extensively in this district, as it well may be if 150 million people are to have cranberry sauce with their roast turkey on Thanksgiving Day."

2. Page 129—The full impact of William Lambard's *Eirenarcha* and the use of the Common Law by the Pilgrims is explained by C. C. Parnes *Plymouth and the Common Law*, pp. 27-48.



